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Founded in 1877, The Theatre has been under a new editorship since the number for September, 1894, inclusive.

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INDEX TO VOL. XXXVII.

PAGE

Abbey, Mr. H. E., death of 297
Abbey and Co., failure of 119
Abingdon, Mr. W. L., portrait and memoir of 270
Actress, abuse of the term . . . 59, 168
Adams, Mr. Davenport, articles by 19, 87, 252
Alexander, Mr., 228; playing before the Prince and Princess of Wales at Wynyard Park 289
"America for Americans" . . . 234
American Stage, Anglicisation of the 314
Arditi, Signor, reminiscences of . . 262
Baird, Miss Dorothea, marriage of . 110
Bancroft, Mr., readings by 352
Barrett, Mr. Wilson 229
Beatty-Kingston, Mr. W., article by 11
Beckett, Mr. Arthur à, article by . . 132
*Belle of Cairo, the** 277
Bells, the, first production of 304
*Behind the Scenes** 100
Berlin, the drama in, 47, 106, 159, 222, 281, 342
Bernhardt, Madame, her season in London, 42; anecdotes of, 228, 232; again pleads for a Conservatoire in America 234
*Blind Marriage, A** 157
*Boys Together** 216
Brandon, Miss Olga, portrait and memoir of 5
Brereton, Mr. Austin, article by . . 314
Brichanteau, Comédien 198
Brough, Mr. Lionel, portrait and memoir of 91
Brough, Mr. Sydney, portrait and notice of 91
Buchanan, Mr. Robert, articles by 9, 208
Burnand, Mr. F. C., article by . . . 28
*Carmen** 37
Carson, Mr. Murray, article by, 85; in a new part 93
Chasemore, Mr. A., illustrated article by, 184; special drawings by . 268, 269
Claretie, M. 295
Collaboration, article on 85
Coquelin, M., 116; and the Comédie Française 232
Criticism, dramatic 119
Crtic-dramatist, the 117
Criticism in the Provinces 143, 189, 231, 246
Criticism, dramatic, in America 57, 298
*Crown of Thorns, A** 279
Crouch, Professor, death of . . . 236
*Countess Gucki, The** 92
Covent Garden Theatrcal Fund, the . 170
Cymbeline, stage history of, 121; revival of, at the Lyceum, 212; a note on, 268; illustrations of, . . 268, 269
Davey, Mr. R., article by 257
Deadheads 147
Dickens, Mr. Charles, death of 110, 230
Dodson, Mr. J. E. 174
Donna Diana† 338
Defunct drama, the 208

PAGE

Dramatic likenesses 265
*Duchess of Coolgardie, the** 215
Elliott, Mr. Henry, articles by 77, 180, 242
Escott, Mr. Arthur, articles by 27, 150
English players, loyalty of 325
Experimental matinée, the 322
Fanciful comody 77
Fatal accident on the stage . . . 230
Felons on the stage 150
Fernandez, Mr. James, portrait and memoir of, 154; in a new part . 35
Field, Miss Kate, death of 56
Fitzgerald, Mr. Percy, article by . . 204
Fulton, Mr. Charles, portrait and memoir of, 33; in a new part . . . 157
Fyfe, Mr. H. H., articles by 29, 198
Giddens, Mr. George, portrait and memoir of 211
Ginaodh, Mr Douglas, articles by 143, 189, 246
Goncourt, M. de, death of 172
Goodman, Mr. E. J., article by, 265; new play by 279
Gounod's autobiography 136
Grundy, Mr. Sydney, new play by . 34
Hare, Mr. 351; as Eccles 351
Harris, Sir Augustus, death of, 4; memoir of, 5; proposed memorial to 167
Hatton, Mr. Joseph, new play by, 93; article by 328
Happy Land, the, recollections of . . 63
*Haven of Content** 335
Hawkins, Mr. Frederick, articles by 80, 304
Heminge and Condell 70
Hawtrey, Mr. Charles, new play by . 274
Herbert, Mr. W., death of 293
*Her Father's Friend** 99
Hersee, Mr. H., death of 55
*His Little Dodge** 337
*His Relations** 42
Hollingshead, Mr. John, article by . 73
Hoey, Mrs John, death of 173
*Honourable Member, the** 98
*In Sight of St. Paul's** 156
Irving, Sir Henry, proposes to play Robespierre, 51; his liking for the period of the French Revolution, 51; entertained by the Glasgow Pencil Club, 115; Sir John Millais' portrait of, 165; wishes to play George Washington, 167; singular article in the *National Review* upon, 176; his Iachimo, 214; in his dressing room at the Lyceum, 291; his delight in work, 291; his pride in his profession 72, 353
Irving, Mr. H. B., marriage of, to Miss Baird 110
Italian Cities, the drama in, 48, 160, 225, 284, 346
Jecks, Miss Clara, portrait and memoir of 126
Jeffreys, Miss Ellis, portrait and memoir of 303
*Josiah's Dream** 40
Kid-glove critic, the 202
Kuhe, Mr. Ernest, article by . . . 127

	PAGE
Kuhe, Mr. Wilhelm, recollections of	29
Leo XIII and the drama	350
Lewis, Mr. Harold, article by	195
Lewis, Mr. James, death of	235
Liar, the†	170
*Lord Tom Noddy**	220
*Love in Idleness**	279
*Little Genius, the**	96
*Lost in New York**	158
*Love on Crutches**	155
Madrid, the drama in 49, 108, 161, 226, 286,	347
*Magda**	35
*Major Raymond**	97
*Manxman, the**	334
Marie Antoinette and the Stage	80
Marlowe's *Faustus* revived	114
Matthews, Mr. Brander, on the drama	118
Mascagni, Signor, anecdote of	296
Merivale, Mr. Herman, new play by	38
Melba, Mme	351
Mendelssohn, anecdote of	117
Millward, Miss, portrait and memoir of	241
Monckton, Lady, portrait and memoir of	175
Mounet-Sully, M., entertained in Paris	116
*Monte Carlo**	219
*Mr. Martin**	274
*Mummy, the**	98
My Artful Valet†	221
*My Girl**	94
Nastiness on the stage	299
National Portrait Gallery, some pictures in the	204
*Newmarket**	218
Newton, Mr. H. Chance, article by	147
New York, the drama in 50, 109, 164, 226, 287,	348
Nordica, Mme., marriage of	55, 351
*On the March**	95
Opera at Covent Garden	42, 100
Ormathwaite, Mr. article by	70
Oxenford, John, his criticism of the first production of *The Bells*	305
Paris, the drama in 46, 105, 159, 222, 280,	341
Patti, Mme.	350, 172
Personality, copyright in	24
Pinero, Mr.	113
*Playing the Game**	41
Playwriting	66
*Poor Old Perkins**	339
Provinces, the drama in the, 43, 101,	340
Pemberton, Mr. T. E., article by	193
*Queen's Proctor, the**	38
Realism on the stage	132
Rehan, Miss Ada 92, 155, 228, 296,	351
*Rescued Honour, A**	41
Reszke, M. Jean de, marriage of	289
Richmond, new theatre at	294
Righton, Mr. Edward, article by	63
Ristori, Mme.	173
"Rogue and Vagabond" delusion, the	1
Rossi, Signor, death of, 58; memoir of, 11; tribute to his memory in Rome	118
*Round a Tree**	339
Roze, Mme., anecdote of	115
Rubinstein, anecdote of	117
Saint-Saens, M.	351
Sarcey, M., on Ibsen	19
Salvation Army and the theatres	294
Salvini, Signor, anecdote of	165
Savoy Opera, is it played out?	127
School for Scandal, the†	36
Scott, Mr. Clement 229, 290, 291,	352
Scott-Siddons, Mrs., death of	357
Self-advertisement, the art of	140
Shah, the late, at the Opera Comique	28
Shaw, Mr. G. Bernard	350
Shakspere, his first editors, 70; royalties on his plays 57, 87,	170
Sign of the Cross, the, Mr. Gladstone on, 167; its wide success 167,	230
Stage, the, under Victoria	242
Stage, the, in Turkey	257
Stage Costume	184
Stage dancing	252
Stage production	318
Stevenson, R. L., and the drama	311
Suburban theatres, increase in the number of 115, 231,	356
*Sunbury Scandal, the**	39
Syndicates and the stage	16
*Teddy's Wives**	278
Terriss, Miss Ellaline, portrait and memoir of	62
Terry, Mr. Benjamin, death of and memoir	27
Terry, Mr. Edward	230
Terry, Miss Ellen, the greatness of her Imogen in *Cymbeline*, 232; gives up the part of Lady Anne to Miss Arthur, 350; Mr. Du Maurier's opinion of	350
Theatre-building as an investment	73
Theatres, the, and the Press	52
*The Greatest of These———**.	34
Toole, Mr., on tour, 229; influence of Dickens upon	230
Too-previous paragraph, the	307
Tree, Mrs. Beerbohm, portrait and memoir of	332
Tree, Mr., as Hotspur, 232; in America	351
*Two Little Vagabonds**	273
*Under the Red Robe**	271
Vaughan, Miss Kate, benefit to	52
Verdi, Signor, anecdote of	117
Vienna, the drama in, 48, 107, 224, 283,	344
Wagner, the music of	233
Wagner, Mr. Leopold, article by	66
*Wanderer from Venus**	55
Watson, Mr. Malcolm, article by	24
*When Greek Meets Grëek**	93
*White Elephant, A**	333
*White Silk Dress, the**	276
Wild, Jonathan	328
Willard, Mr. 229,	351
Wilmot, Mr. Chas., death of	357
Wyndham, Mr., presentation to	353
Zedlitz, the Baroness Von, article by	136

* *Signifies a first production* † *a revival.*

THE THEATRE.

JULY, 1896.

Our Watch Tower.

THE "ROGUE AND VAGABOND" DELUSION.

BOUT a century ago, we are told, an Irish judge, beaten on a legal point by Curran, was unfortunate enough to lose his temper. "If that is the law," he said, "I may as well burn my law books." "Better read them, my lord," was the reply. It is to be feared that the Lord Chief Justice stands in need of a somewhat similar admonition. Presiding at the latest yearly dinner in aid of the Royal General Theatrical Fund, he adopted the old notion, fallacious as it is shown to have been, that players worthy of the name were formerly "rogues and vagabonds" in the eye of the law. He had been reminded, he said, that at one time the actors would not have been so willing to confront the Lord Chief Justice of the realm, the head of the criminal judicature. "In truth," he continued, "this points to one of the most remarkable changes that have occurred within comparatively recent times with regard to the great profession of the stage. You will forgive me if I refer to a statute passed in the fortieth year of good Queen Bess. One portion of it ran—'All fencers, bearwards, common players of interludes, and minstrels (not belonging to any baron of the realm or persons of greater degree) wandering abroad without licence of two justices at the least are liable to be grievously whipped and burned through the gristle of the ear with a hot iron of the compass of an inch about.' That was in the days of good Queen Bess, when only barons and persons of greater degree could enjoy, without incurring the risk of penal consequences, the society of 'fencers, bearwards, and common players of interludes.' Are you aware, gentlemen playactors,

that until the year 1825, thirteen years before the Queen ascended the throne, you were one and all vagabonds by Act of Parliament? It is indeed a remarkable change; and gentlemen and ladies following the profession are now received into that conglomerate called Society, as all men and women ought to be received, upon their merits. They take rank in their profession with other professions; and it was a gracious act of the Queen to bestow that title upon Sir Henry Irving."

Naturally enough, some of the diners, mindful of the position occupied by Lord Russell of Killowen, looked at each other in amazement as he uttered one part of this speech. It is simply a vulgar error, long since exposed, to assume that at any time the properly-authorised actor has been a vagabond by Act of Parliament. The truth of the matter was clearly shown in an article contributed to *The Theatre* in May, 1895, by a solicitor well versed in the antiquities of law. The mistake into which the Lord Chief Justice fell the other day originated in a mis-reading of the Act passed against vagrants in 1597, when every baron had the power to license stage plays. The measure included ragamuffin "strolling players," but expressly excepted "players belonging to any baron in the realm, or any other person of greater degree, authorised to play under the hand and seal of arms of such baron or personage." In other words, the art of acting, rightly so called, had made sufficient progress in England as to call for recognition at the hands of the Legislature. Instead of being a blot on the actor's escutcheon, as has been supposed, the Act was a charter of his rights and privileges. It really acknowledged and assured to him his legal status. It gave the protection of the law to those who were players of good repute, worthy of the name, and condemned as rogues and vagabonds only those who, on account of bad character or gross incompetence, were unable to obtain a patron. In no sense was it directed against such men as Shakspere, Alleyn, Burbage, or their companions. In 1713 it was repealed, and from that time, therefore, had no further force or effect. Some years later an amending Act was passed, declaring that any person who represented stage plays or other entertainment, of the stage *without authority from the Lord Chamberlain*—long previously entrusted with the responsibility of looking after the theatres—should be deemed rogues and vagabonds. An Act of 1744 as to vagrancy especially excepts from its operation all players authorized by law. From this we pass to the Act of 1843, which, saying nothing about rogues and vagabonds, deals exclusively with the regulation of playhouses.

So, *pace* the Lord Chief Justice, eminent as he is, there has

never been anything in the Statute Book in the nature of a reproach upon the theatrical profession. The law has never branded the real actor as a rogue and vagabond; on the contrary, it has taken care that his calling shall be entitled to respect and special protection. Candour, however, compels us to acknowledge that Lord Russell of Killowen was not without a faint excuse for the egregious blunder to which we have called attention. Old beliefs, even in the face of direct evidence against them, notoriously die hard. It suited the purpose of the Puritans to represent the actor as a rogue and vagabond by law, and since their time the idea has descended from generation to generation as an article of popular faith. Only two years ago, we remember, a well-read player, Mr. Henry Neville, asked the Actors' Association, at one of their formal meetings, to make an effort to relieve his profession from this wholly imaginary stigma. Licences are still necessary, not by actors, but by those who own places in which stage plays are performed. The principle is the same, though the responsibility is shifted from the actor to the manager. Under the old law, anyone who had authority from justices of the peace, or a baron, or a person of high degree, was perfectly at liberty to pursue his calling without let or hindrance. It ought, therefore, to be clear, even to the Lord Chief Justice, that the real actor has never been treated as a rogue and vagabond by the Legislature, which in this way concerned itself with disreputable persons only. Otherwise, perhaps, Tillotson would not have made a friend of Betterton, or George III. a friend of Sarah Siddons, or—well, we need not multiply instances in point. Let us hope that the Lord Chief Justice will read a little more before he again speaks of the legal status of the actor in the past. George III. once remarked that he was a better lawyer than anyone in his dominions, but that, unlike most other lawyers, he did not know where to lay his finger on a particular Act. In at least one respect, we think, he might have put Lord Russell of Killowen to the blush.

Portraits.

MISS OLGA BRANDON.

IF, said a writer in this magazine not very long ago, "if she had but a few good parts, what work she might do!" And the sentence expresses what many who care for good, strong, romantic acting must frequently have felt when they have seen Miss Olga Brandon acting in pieces unworthy of her rare talents, and assuming characters that gave little or no hope for the display of her individuality and power. Two parts she has played that gave her chances which she was not backward in grasping. As Vashti Dethic in Mr. Henry Arthur Jones's *Judah*, the unwilling medium through whom her rascally but amusing father played upon the fancies of a public only desiring to be duped, Miss Brandon acted with so much force, and so much naturalness, that she at once took a leading place among the really fine romantic actresses of the day—and how few in number are they who may be placed in this category! Again, in *Hypatia* she showed that an excellent piece of acting, even though the opportunity for it be of brief duration, and have to be long waited for, may do much to render tolerable a tedious play. As the Jew's daughter Ruth, Miss Brandon had but one scene in which to score a triumph, but that one scene she made the scene of the play. Her confession was a moving piece of admirable acting, and both her picturesque appearance and her playing left a deeper impression than anything else in the piece, save, perhaps, certain moments in the performance of Mr. Tree. Parts like these are not frequent in the plays of to-day, and too often, as at present in *The Prisoner of Zenda*, Miss Brandon has to be content with less interesting artistic material. Born in Australia, of American parents, she made her first appearance in New York some twelve years ago. In 1887 she came to England, and joined Mr. Edouin at the Royalty. Then, after an American tour with Mr. J. S. Clarke and the "legitimate" drama, she became a member of Mr. and Mrs. Kendal's company, leaving them eventually for the Criterion. Thence she passed to the Shaftesbury, where her success in *Judah* was made. Miss Brandon has also gone through a course at the Adelphi, and did exceedingly well there, though neither melodrama nor "drawing-room drama" is so well suited to her gifts as romantic plays with strong, emotional, yet natural situations. It cannot be that so good an actress, with so striking a personality, will have to wait long for another opportunity.

Photographed by Alfred Ellis, 20, Upper Baker St., N.W. *Copyright.*

MISS OLGA BRANDON,

IN HYPATIA.

The Round Table.

SIR AUGUSTUS HARRIS.

By a Musical Critic.

AS *The Times* remarks, the theatrical and operatic world is poorer by a very remarkable man. Sir Augustus Harris, the lessee of Drury Lane, Covent Garden, and other theatres, died at the Pavilion Hotel, Folkestone, on June 22nd. Only ten days before he was entertaining the members of the Congress of the Chambers of Commerce at Drury Lane, and as he stood upon the stage that night he looked at least as well as he had been at any time during the last two or three years. On the following day he went away for a holiday. Just before his intended return he was taken ill, and a week later saw the end. He was only just over forty-four, and with much that he had set himself to do as the work of his life still unaccomplished.

Born in 1852, he showed in his youth a liking for a mercantile life, but after a brief experience relinquished it. He thought that acting was his vocation, but he was mistaken again, and so was John Ryder, who strongly advised him to go on the stage. His achievements in this way were not remarkable. His first engagement was in 1873, when he supported Miss Geneviève Ward at the Theatre Royal, Manchester, as Malcolm in *Macbeth*. After this we find him interpreting light comedy parts with Barry Sullivan at Liverpool. To Mr. Mapleson belongs the honour of "discovering" him, for it was under this famous impresario that he obtained an engagement as a stage manager—at first, of course, as a subordinate. Here Augustus Harris felt confidence in his own powers, and his ability in this way soon became so conspicuous as to justify Mr. Mapleson in investing him with supreme command. In 1876 he went to Paris as the representative of Lord Newry (now Earl of Kilmorey) to negotiate with the company at the Odéon for the production of *Les Danischeff* at the St. James's Theatre. He was successful, and the play was produced by him as arranged, in a way that earned for him the hearty compliments of M. Boudois, the well-known Paris stage manager. At the end of the same year he produced his first pantomime. This was at the Crystal Palace, in conjunction with

Mr. Charles Wyndham. The result was very gratifying. As Harry Greenlanes in *Pink Dominoes*, produced at the Criterion in 1877, he created the part by which, as an actor, he is best remembered. Soon after that Mr. Edgar Bruce appointed him acting manager of the Royalty Theatre. To his restless energy, however, the post did not yield him the amount of work for which his nature seemed to crave, and he very soon undertook the additional cares of stage-management, supplementing this by rendering his services as author to Mr. Bruce.

In the year 1879, Augustus Harris became manager of Drury Lane Theatre, having the necessary brains but not the equally necessary money with which to make a start. As he himself used to say, when he was accepted as the new tenant, he stood on the darkened stage with the key in his hand and only a few shillings in his pocket. His credit, however, was good, and a banking account was soon established. With so large a house as Drury Lane he knew that large effects were needed, and having taken the theatre primarily with the idea of producing a particular kind of up-to-date melodrama, he added to that notion a scheme of spectacular display that was in its way entirely new to the stage. The result, as exemplified in *The World*, the first of the series, hardly needs recalling. The very recapitulation of the names of some of them are re-echoes of success. *Human Nature*, *Pleasure*, *The Prodigal Daughter*, *The Derby Winner*, are but names, but they are separate monuments to a genius that in his case indubitably consisted in the infinite capacity for taking pains. In his pantomimes, too, the same rare ability for directing an immense show was manifested. As every Christmas drew near, the announcement that Sir Augustus Harris intended to eclipse all previous productions in his coming pantomime was spread broadcast, but those who heard it, bearing in their minds the crisp dialogue, with the gorgeous processions floating before their eyes, and remembering the tuneful music of the previous year, shook their heads and murmured, "impossible." With the Boxing Day invariably came the conviction that the boast was no boast—that the promise had been faithfully kept.

But now is to be recorded what is by far the most important of Sir Augustus Harris's achievements—his resuscitation of Opera, both Italian and English, in this country. His first attempt in this work, for which his early training under his father, a noted impresario in his day, had specially fitted him, was in superintending the production of *Lohengrin* by the Carl Rosa Opera Company at Drury Lane in 1887. It was so successful that he was induced to try his hand at producing an opera alone. On June 13th he successfully presented *Aïda*, in which Jean de

Reszke, at that time new to the London stage, appeared. The following year, with a powerful syndicate at his back, he opened Covent Garden, and, during a season extending beyond the time originally arranged for, produced seventeen operas with very gratifying results. His company included the De Reszkes, M. Maurel, Signor del Puente, Mme. Hauk, Mme. Arnoldson, and Mme. Nordica. In 1889 he was still more successful, having strengthened his company by the addition of such singers as M. D'Andrade, M. Lassalle, Mme. Albani, Mme. Rose, Mme. Melba, and Mme. Ella Russell. The following year was the first in which French and German operas were produced here in the languages in which they were written, and again the public favoured the exertions of the untiring *entrepreneur*. His production of *Cavalleria Rusticana* in 1892, with Mme. Calvé in the principal part, will long be remembered. *Falstaff*, *I Pagliacci*, *I Rantzau*, and *La Navarraise*, to name no others, were produced by him upon a scale that has been reached in no other country. By keeping his finger constantly upon the public pulse, and by noting every change in public taste, he owed his success in this most difficult path. Whatever was wanted he always provided, and the gift of finding out his audience's requirements, almost before they themselves knew them, must be added to the list of Sir Augustus Harris's many strong points. If so businesslike a man could be said to have had an artistic weakness, that weakness was certainly for Wagner; but his instincts were too true to allow him to present him except at such times when he knew that the venture would be likely to be received with favour.

There is another group of stage works in connection with which his name will long be remembered. This group includes the production of no fewer than seven Shaksperean plays, the engagement of Madame Ristori for a short season, and later of John M'Cullough (whom he supported in *Virginius* as Icilius), the securing of the renowned Saxe-Meiningen company, with Herr Barnay at their head, and twelve years later, in 1893, the visit of the Comédie Française in a *répertoire* consisting of thirty plays; and lastly, the inducing of the Grand Ducal Court Company of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha to play at Drury Lane Theatre. His last effort in this direction was to obtain the English rights of *Der Wunderknabe*, which, however, he intended for the Avenue instead of Drury Lane Theatre. These enterprises prove him to have had nothing at heart so much as the abstract desire to be successful. He was one of the greatest showmen—using the word in its least disparaging sense—that the world has seen.

Of what may be called his extra-theatrical work it is not our

province to enter upon here. But they must be glanced at, if only to show how insufficient the manifold cares of his theatrical and operatic ventures were to feed the consuming energy within him. He was the first member of the Strand division of the London County Council, and a member of the Committee of the Council on Theatres and Music Halls. His contribution of business tact and actual experience was invaluable in importing sanity into the proceedings of the committee. Without him, there can be little doubt, the views of the faddists would have prevailed to a far larger extent than they did. In the years 1890-91 he acted as Sheriff of the City of London, and was knighted on the occasion of the visit of the German Emperor. On the death of Mr. W. H. Smith he thought of being a Parliamentary candidate for the Strand division, but when it became known that Mr. W. F. D. Smith was desirous of standing, he gracefully withdrew from the field. He belonged to several City companies. He was a Freemason, and as such had attained high rank. His record of work done is the record of a full life. It seems hardly credible that so much has been compressed into a life of forty-four years.

Of the characteristics of Augustus Harris it is difficult to say which were the most conspicuous. His knowledge of the value of the reputation of success was intuitive, for whatever the fortunes of his ventures may have been, he was always careful to maintain the appearance of magnificent prosperity. He was never known to admit that business was bad. Next must be put his readiness to do anything, a disposition which materially assisted him forward in his younger days, and which habit he never afterwards lost. He saw nothing derogatory in teaching a troupe of ballet girls, by his own example, how to perform a movement which he himself had invented. Then again, he was a man who came to his work with the simple determination to make it pay, hampered by no prejudices, with no fads to air, with no "views" upon art and the stage. He believed that for opera well presented there was always an audience, and his eight years' tenure of Covent Garden has proved him to be right. He excelled in the management of that usually most autocratic personage, the operatic star. In other countries he or she could do as they pleased, but not so under Sir Augustus Harris. He not only had his own way with them, but prevented them from quarrelling among themselves—a truly wonderful achievement.

Perhaps if he had entrusted more work to his capable lieutenants his life might have been prolonged; but he had a distrust of the abilities of other people as compared with his own. He preferred to see all his own work through, and no one could

have been more entitled to the full credit of everything that was done in his name. The man who attempts to fill the place his death leaves vacant will be hardy indeed. Truly "the theatrical and operatic world is poorer by a very remarkable man."

AN INTERESTING EXPERIMENT.

By Robert Buchanan.

THE theatrical problem of the future will be how to produce good and interesting dramatic work at a minimum of outlay, so that the necessity for "long runs" may be obviated and a profit secured on a limited number of representations. Unless this problem can be solved, the Drama will continue to decline, and managers will continue to collapse. Under existing conditions, the production of a new play is so costly an affair that only enormous receipts for months can make the representation possible without nightly loss. The large and increasing salaries demanded by popular artists, the fabulous rents paid for west-end theatres, the expense of newspaper and other advertising, added to the cost of mounting and rehearsing, and complicated with the west-end system of filling the house with "paper" in order to avoid the exposure of empty seats, all make a new production in London a very doubtful speculation.

In view of this fact, and the serious condition of the Drama in London, I desire to draw attention to the experiment just made by myself at the New Grand Theatre, Croydon, one of the most beautiful and convenient edifices in the kingdom, and recently erected. Here, on Monday, June 8, I produced an original play, *The Wanderer from Venus*, with a company of west-end artists, and ran it for a week, in the midst of tropic heat, to paying business. In choosing Croydon for the scene of my experiment, I was actuated by the following considerations: (1) I desired to take the public opinion on the play, and to avoid the feverish and unnatural conditions of a London "first-night"; (2) I wished to discover both the strong and the weak points of the play before presenting it in London, and to test the strength and weakness of the cast with a view to individual changes if necessary; (3) I wished to steer clear of the Scylla of press puffery and the Charybdis of press abuse; and (4) I desired, at a minimum outlay, to present the piece to *paying* audiences, with an almost total exclusion of dead-heads. With regard to the first consideration, I have always contended that a "first-night" audience in London does not, and cannot, fairly represent the paying public. Apart from the critics of the press, it is composed, in the dearer portions of the theatre, of interested

persons, dead-heads, quidnuncs, dilletantes, ninety-nine per cent. of whom have vested interests in the drama and *desire* the play to fail; while the assemblage in the cheaper parts consists mainly of typical "first-nighters," with a strong love for horse-play and bear-baiting. The whole atmosphere of a first-night is false and unwholesome. Add to this the fact, for which I have always contended, that the quidnuncs and dilletantes of London are, for the most part, very low in intelligence. And this brings me to my third consideration, the puffery or the abuse of "next morning" criticism. Almost all the great popular successes of recent years have been won in the teeth of adverse notices, while nearly all the colossal failures have been welcomed with newspaper pæans. The newspapers had scarcely a good word to say for the *Private Secretary*, *Charley's Aunt*, *A Man's Shadow*, *Alone in London*, *The Gaiety Girl*, and *Trilby*—all great financial successes in or out of London. The newspapers "enthused" over *The Sin of St. Hilda*, *The Grey Mare*, *The Rogue's Comedy*, *The Star of India*, and countless other portentous failures.

Now, under different conditions all this would be impossible, and such conditions are to be found even now in our outlying theatres. To begin with, these theatres are worked at popular prices. Mr. Bernard Shaw, *àpropos* of *The Wanderer from Venus*, writes in the *Saturday Review*: "I paid three shillings for a stall, and twopence for a programme. Add to this the price of a first-class return ticket from London, three-and-sixpence (and you are under no compulsion to travel first-class if second or third will satisfy your sense of dignity), and the visit to Croydon costs three-and-sixpence less than the price of a bare stall in the Strand. And as Miss Kate Rorke not only plays the part of an Angel in her most touching manner, but flies bodily up to Heaven at the end of the play, to the intense astonishment of the most hardened playgoers, there is something sensational to talk about afterwards!" Mr. Shaw also remarks with absolute truth that "the Croydon Theatre is to some of our Strand theatres as a Pullman drawing-room car is to an old second-class carriage!" Yet, as Mr. Shaw points out, the price for a stall at Croydon is only three shillings, as against half-a-guinea in London!

What is the result? The "dead-head" system being unknown, and the only seats not paid for being given for value received to persons who exhibit bills, &c., the audience is throughout a paying one, and a £50 house at Croydon contains as many living people as a £100 house in London. Rent and working expenses being considerably lower, profit is obtainable on very moderate receipts. The country company which played

The Strange Adventures of Miss Brown at Croydon took, out of its share of the week's receipts, a clear profit of £176, after paying all expenses. With *The Wanderer from Venus*, after painting new scenery, paying £50 for mechanical effects, salaries of a very expensive company, cost of dresses, new music, &c., we came out with a very trifling loss. Produced at a West-end theatre, under the ordinary conditions, the piece would have required a capital of at least from £2,000 to £3,000.

If such productions were more common, many original plays, on which London managers naturally fear to risk their money, would speedily see the light. Pieces would be tried on their merits, authors who are now pining for a hearing would get a chance, and plays would no longer be at the mercy of first-night quidnuncs and reckless critics. My friend Mr. Tom Craven, of the New Grand Theatre, Croydon, informs me that the experiment of which I write has been so satisfactory to the local management that he hopes to renew it as often as possible; and, doubtless, many other managers will follow his example. The time has come to protest, firmly and practically, against the arrogant pretence of London proper to decide the fortunes of plays. Suburban and provincial audiences, which pay their money for amusement, are intelligent, sympathetic, and, above all, unprejudiced. They represent the great English public, and with them, I believe, lies the future salvation of the native English Drama.

ERNESTO ROSSI.

By W. Beatty-Kingston.

THE only plausible excuse I can proffer to the readers of *The Theatre* for this inadequate attempt to outline the career of the greatest Italian actor of the nineteenth century lies in the circumstance that I was bound to Ernesto Rossi for fifteen years by ties of close friendship, never for a moment broken by dissension or slackened by separation. It was during my long residence in Berlin that I first saw him play Shaksperean parts "als Gast" at the Royal Opera House and Friedrich Wilhelmstädtiches Theater, and with a success quite unprecedented in my German theatrical experiences. On that occasion he carried all before him in the "Modern Athens," though not one per cent. of his audiences was familiar with the language in which he spoke his parts, and though the Berlin theatre-going public is singularly reserved in its attitude towards dramatic artists, even of the most shining merit. Rossi, however, took the coldly critical Berliners by storm, and I have never heard such vehement

and sustained applause as that which they accorded to his impersonations of Othello, Hamlet, and King Lear. I did not, however, become personally acquainted with him at that period, but some years later, when he came to London for the second time, bringing with him a letter of introduction to me from a common friend in Florence—a draft on my humble hospitality, payable at sight, which I gladly honoured. For the personality of Rossi, off as well as on the stage, was supremely attractive. As an actor, the glamour of his interpretative genius held you spell-bound; as a man, his simplicity of character, amiability of disposition, and grace of manner inspired you with sincere affection. His intellectuality and versatility impressed me strongly; he was endowed by nature with a fine delicate wit and amazing memory; he had acquired a vast knowledge of general literature, and wrote elegant prose as well as forcible verse; his conversation was instructive as well as entertaining, and it might truthfully be said of him, as erst of Goldsmith, that "he touched nothing he did not adorn." In this "Vermous Babylon," he and his admirable consort were often the guests of my wife and myself. When his venture here came to a close we parted, vowing to meet again as soon as our respective spells of holiday-time could be made to fit; and, accordingly, during the autumn of 1883, we paid the Rossis a long visit at their beautiful country seat on Hugo's Hill (Montughi), a castellated mansion situate about two miles distant from the City of Flowers, and dating back to the thirteenth century of our era. The Villa Rossi, formerly "La Macine," is one of the most picturesquely-situated of the countless summer residences that crest the rounded heights and stud the undulating slopes of the vine-clad hills surrounding Florence, and fringing the fruitful valley through which yellow Arno winds his way sluggishly from the foot of the Apennines to the sea. While we were staying in this earthly Paradise, Rossi was deeply engaged in translating *Julius Cæsar* into Italian blank verse; and it is one of my most gratifying remembrances that he paid my Italian scholarship the high compliment of asking me to assist him in completing his version of the great classical play—one, for obvious reasons, enjoying exceptional public favour in the Ansonian peninsula—which version, as a matter of fact, was satisfactorily finished during my sojourn at Montughi, and subsequently superseded all the translations that had previously held the Italian stage. Before commencing his *Giulio Cesare*, Rossi had assiduously studied English for five years. He had never mastered pronunciation, nor caught the knack of our colloquial vernacular; but he had acquired a sound and thorough knowledge of the

English tongue that enabled him to apprehend Shakspere's subtlest meanings, and to give them adequate interpretation in his own euphonious idiom. Moreover, he owned the finest Shaksperean library, including the works of famous commentators, that I have ever seen. Hence his version of *Julius Cæsar*, for absolute fidelity to the original text, is unsurpassed even by the German renderings, hitherto universally recognised as triumphs of painstaking exactitude; while Rossi's poetical nature, cultivated intellect, and intense appreciation of Shakspere's genius have imparted to his lines—especially in the more heroic episodes of the tragedy—a lofty austerity of style and nobility of diction that are remarkably impressive.

Ernesto Rossi was born at Leghorn in 1829, of parents belonging to the untitled *mezzo ceto*—his father had been a soldier of the first Napoleonic Empire—and took to the stage immediately after leaving school. He went through the drudgery of his chosen calling, earning salaries of from five to eight shillings a week, at Fojano and other small provincial towns when a beardless lad, and his first serious *début* in the "speaking part" of a young lover took place at the Pantera Theatre, in Lucca, a few weeks after he had completed his seventeenth year. Through sheer nervousness he made such a terrible fiasco that he was on the point of renouncing the dramatic profession for ever, when his manager and fellow-actors persuaded him to "try again." Thenceforth for some years he worked with travelling companies through Central and Northern Italy and Southern Austria. In 1852 he joined the famous "Compagnia Sarda," then subventioned by the Piedmontese State, and playing at the Teatro Casignano, in Turin. Rossi was engaged as "first actor," though not as *primo altore assohito*, with choice of parts. His *répertoire* was large and his popularity considerable. At Turin he encountered Adelaide Ristori, with whom he acted for several subsequent years; these two great artists touring together persistently long after the Government subsidy had been withdrawn from the Royal Sardinian Company. At the instance of Madame Conneau, then Lady-in-Waiting to the Empress Eugénie, they visited Paris in the Exhibition year (1855), and gave a series of brilliantly successful performances under the immediate patronage of the Imperial Family and the Napoleonic aristocracies of birth and wealth. Vienna was the next European capital visited by Rossi, who played at the Wieden Theatre through a short winter season, and was very handsomely received by the public of the Kaiserstadt. It was about at that time that he seriously addressed himself to the study of the leading parts in Shakspere's principal tragedies—eight of which eventually

enriched his *répertoire* ; already in 1858 he played Macbeth in Venice, and Lear inTurin, with stupendous success, and at once took his stand in the land of his birth as the first Shaksperean actor of the day. His subsequent impersonations of Hamlet, Othello, Richard III., Shylock, Romeo, and Coriolanus—*rôles* which he played for over thirty years in every European country, except Greece and Turkey; in Egypt, and in North and South America—earned for him undying fame. Of the eight Shaksperean parts he made his own, he most frequently played Hamlet, Othello, and Lear, his renderings of which, in my opinion, were inimitable. When he took up Romeo, with which he made a great hit in Paris (1866), he was manifestly too robust for the part; his success was mainly due to his melodious voice, elegant elocution, and graceful action. In mature personalities, however, he was simply unapproachable—for instance, his Macbeth, Richard III., and Othello were in all respects the best I had ever set eyes upon.

Rossi's second visit to the French capital was even more triumphant than the first, for in 1866 it was not only the Court and "upper ten" that flocked to the Salle Ventadour to hear him play Shakspere, but the students of all the Faculties and the *grande bourgeoisie* which cared little for the English playwright, but a good deal for the Italian actor. During this visit Rossi had the courage to play Corneille's *Cid* in Italian to a Parisian audience—a risky undertaking, taking the intensity of French Chauvinism into consideration—and the even greater audacity to give the same classical part in French at Bordeaux. His boldness was amply rewarded in both cities by crowded houses and enthusiastic applause. After touring in Spain and Portugal, he crossed the seas to South America, where he remained for nearly three years, building up a fortune which had been seriously impaired by an unfortunate transaction with a New York impresario; a breach of contract involving the payment by Rossi of a forfeit amounting to several thousands of pounds. In Brazil, Peru, Chili, and the Argentine, however, he coined money, as the saying goes, and returned to Italy with a handsome independence, to which he added largely during his subsequent tours in Austria, Hungary, and Germany (1874); France, Belgium, and Holland (1875); Russia, Poland, and Roumania (1876-77); again in Russia, Roumania, Austria, and Egypt (1878-81); once more in South America (1882), and from New York to San Francisco during the following year. Rossi's first appearance in London, at Drury Lane, under the Chatterton management, during the season of 1876, and in the part of Hamlet was in so far

unfortunate that the great actor was suffering from a severe cold, and had temporarily lost the use of his voice. His efforts to make himself heard were painful to witness, but he was practically inaudible, and, on returning to his rooms at the conclusion of the performance, had to take to his bed, where he remained for more than a week before the doctors would allow him to appear a second time, which he did as Lear; his third *rôle* in this metropolis being Romeo, and his fourth Macbeth. His impersonations made a deep impression upon the theatrical critics of twenty years ago, upon the general lovers of Shaksperean drama, and especially upon his fellow-actors, native to this soil, who conjointly took occasion to express to him their warm appreciation of his great gifts. In Rossi's superb town house at Florence, in the Piazza dell' Indipendenza, there is a collection (which he used to call "his Museum") of souvenirs acquired by him in the course of his artistic career—costly presents from emperors, kings, princes, and even republics; addresses, medals, and wreaths executed in the precious metals; valuable works of art given to him by painters, sculptors, and draughtsmen of all nationalities; and among them I noticed a richly-illuminated parchment, splendidly framed, bearing the signatures of over fifty British actors, headed by Benjamin Webster and Henry Irving, with Joseph Maas and Charles Warner bringing up the rear. Phelps and Buckstone, James and Thorne, Emery and Fernandez, Farren, and Sugden signed this address, which used to hang behind the magnificent Sèvres vase presented to Rossi by the Government of the Third Republic in 1875, and the velvet shrine which contains the priceless service of porcelain made expressly for him by order of the German Crown Prince (afterwards Frederick III.); hard by stood the noble embossed and chiselled centre-piece sent to him in 1882 by Kaiser Wilhelm I. "as a slight testimony of admiration and regard;" the inestimable cup bestowed by Alexander II. upon "son cher et grand artiste;" and the gorgeous yataghans, dirks, stiletti, golden and jewelled collars, stars, &c., worn by him in his Shaksperean parts, and one and all the gifts of august personages. There, too, used to be displayed the insignia of the Orders of Chivalry bestowed upon him at different times, fourteen in number, and for the most part commanderies, completing a collection of honours and homages paid to an incorporation of dramatic art such as I believe to be without precedent in the annals of the stage. These distinctions were aptly conferred upon a man of interpretative genius and refined culture, of lofty patriotism, of lavish benevolence and untiring industry, adored by his family, loved by his friends, admired and reverenced by his fellow-

countrymen. Such was Ernesto Rossi, upon whose grave I sorrowfully lay this inadequate tribute of old-standing and sincere affection.

On the occasion of Rossi's funeral, remarkable testimony was borne to the esteem in which the actor was held by his compatriots. Indeed, no more imposing funeral can be remembered by the oldest inhabitant of Florence. Signor Salvini represented the Minister of Education, and delivered a speech at the grave-side. He was much affected, and was several times obliged to pause in order to recover his self-possession. The Mayors of Florence and Livorno also spoke. The hearse was followed by eight carriages laden with wreaths, and by crowds of mourners. It is understood that Signor Rossi has died worth £80,000.

ARE SYNDICATES GOOD FOR THE STAGE?

By One Who Knows Them.

IN the last number of *The Theatre*, my esteemed friend Mr. Joseph Knight had a few words to say on the Financier as he is acted on our stage. With the permission of the Editor, the present writer proposes to make a few remarks on the Financier as the cause of acting (and especially of playhouse running) in others. Not to beat further about the bush—whether it contains two birds or not—it might be worth our while to consider for a few moments the relation of the financier or backer to the stage, and to certain of its works.

The backer is a person of comparatively recent growth. Time was when, for the most part, a man of means was his own manager. He took a theatre or a casino or a pleasure garden, and devoted himself to its exploitation. Or an actor-manager took his chance (and a theatre) with savings of his own. Each proceeding was of course equally foolish, and often, like matrimony, carried with it its own punishment.

But now we have changed all that, as sweepingly as did Sganarelle, in the *Médecin Malgré Lui*, the position of the average human heart. Not only does every actor, large and small (especially the latter), yearn for playhouse possession; he also contrives, somehow or other, to find a backer, or backers, to "put down" money for production after production, in connection with which he (the yearner) may pose histrionically and photographically.

Sometimes the backer of this sort is merely a City speculator, taking his chance of gaining or losing in a sportsmanlike manner; and when he has had enough of it he "cuts the loss." Stage successes being similar in one respect to angels' visits, this kind

of backer also generally soon finds a balance on the wrong side—and acts accordingly.

Sometimes the more or less guileless backer is an aspirant for dramatic or literary honours—and there are many such: meaning, of course, aspirants rather than honours. The uninitiated reader would doubtless be surprised were he to learn the names of the *real* runners of certain of our playhouses. At least two highly-educated and wealthy backers of the "literary" or play-writing kind have found, or rather lost, many a cool thousand for the running of certain important west-end shows of serio-dramatic and semi-operatic description. And yet, during their financial kindness—which, mark you, has been up to now bestowed upon most deserving managers—these two backers have contrived to produce comparatively few examples of their respective literary ability. One has (at his own cost) produced two semi-blank verse dramas of some importance; one play achieving a long run, the other running but for a week and a half.

As for the other "literary" backer (whose work is of a less "cultured" order), considering his opportunities, especially as to money-finding, one is somewhat astonished at his moderation in the production of his own works. Up to now his output has consisted mainly of a couple of collaborations in adaptations of comic-opera libretti, two or three operetta books, and half a duologue. Which is not much of an output for all his outlays.

Of such financial backers as these, whether animated by a desire of gain or glory, little, if any, complaint can legitimately be made. If they fail in either desire, it is nobody's business but their own. If they succeed, and draw many thousands of pounds sheer profit—as one hard-headed capitalist has done out of partially backing a certain play of abnormal run—why, then, they deserve their luck. Moreover, in the achieving of such satisfactory results they have doubtless been of service to certain shrewd, but honest, managers, to say nothing of the companies and staffs that are thus enabled to find employment.

In reply, therefore, to the query at the head of this paper, it may be advanced that, taking one consideration with another, the backer's life, if not invariably a happy one, is often of some slight usefulness to a profession which deserves support while, and *only* while, it does not stoop to degradation. And thereby perhaps may hang a tale—or even many.

This question as to whether backers and syndicates are of use to the drama is, certainly, capable of an entirely opposite reply to that just given; for be it noted that there is quite another sort

of backer altogether. Sometimes he emanates from the drama-patronising section of the Stock Exchange, where he often displays the best of business qualities. But, unfortunately, he often imports exactly the same methods into the running of theatres, where, strange as it may seem, such methods do not always work. Of course we know that business methods are necessary even for theatrical affairs, though many seem to think and to act, otherwise. But still it is not politic to take *too* strict a business tone into the playhouse, especially as regards dealing with the players. These folk are occasionally of a touchy character, and have to be humoured. It is the habit of some backers of this description—who, being accustomed to ordering their office employés here and there, and to being obeyed with mechanical regularity—to treat the ladies and gentlemen (or "artistes") of the company as though they were indeed the mere puppets that a cocksure young writer in a certain young magazine would appear fervently to wish us to believe. Of course, in such cases as these, the contemptuous managerial behaviour is intensified in proportionate ratio to the smallness of the salary paid. Unhappily, however, many of the sufferers have to bear it—with or without grinning—for it is something for a player to get his or her salary in these days.

Therefore, it will be seen that even this kind of blatant but business-like backer has his uses. Certainly, some financiers of this kind withdraw their money-support at a critical moment; but, nevertheless, let us give them credit for what they do achieve in the keeping of financial promises. They, at all events, form some check to the inroads of the lately ubiquitous impresario, Mr. Bogus.

But there is another, and a far worse, kind of backer; and that is the Lover of the Drama who takes a theatre for some lady-friend, who, often enough, has nothing but ambition among the several ingredients necessary towards the making of an actress. This description of backer was once very common, but he has to some extent died out of late, owing in part, doubtless, to effluxion of time, and probably, in some measure, to having lost the large sums he so unselfishly provided for his fair votary of Thalia.

Those specimens that *do* exist—or who have lately come forward for this strange kind of financing—do their backing in smaller proportions than of yore. Indeed, it often takes a good many of them to find sufficient capital for the running of even one theatre. When these several backers *are* found, and are more or less amicably contracted together, the result is usually called a "Syndicate."

Alas! that way Chaos lies; for, in many instances, *each* backer of the group introduces a nominee of the feminine gender, and in few instances has the nominee any single qualification for the stage except good looks, plus occasionally a genius for high kicking. Of course each nominator insists (or is caused to insist) that *his* nominee shall have a leading character; or that, at least, the rôle allotted to her shall be in no wise inferior to that given to any other nominee in the cast. Thus perplexity becomes rampant in the breast of the so-called "sole and responsible" manager who is put up to direct matters; and thus dire quarrels sometimes set in among the financial nominators. Nay, worse, such quarrels have occasionally been known to rage even among the fair nominees themselves; and to result in the weakest of such quarrellers going to the wall. Or, in other words, the said weakest—which, in this connection, means the poorest—are ousted by the strongest, who very properly survive, at least, until their respective nominators become what is called in the higher theatrical and financial circles—"stony broke." Which sad cricis, especially in certain haphazard productions, does not take long to arrive.

And herein lies the chief reason why so many promising theatrical speculations—especially of the burlesque or "musical-play" description—fail, and fail ignominiously. If you trace the frequent little rift within the theatrical lute, you will often find that it had its origin in the quarrels of infatuated backers and their histrionically ignorant "lady-friends."

And how many of such theatres are run on these lines? you ask. Ah! many more than ought to be, believe me. Is it worth while, therefore, to enquire whether such backers and "syndicates" as these are beneficial to the poor old British Drama?

M. SARCEY ON IBSEN.

By W. Davenport Adams.

M. SARCEY contributes to the June number of *Cosmopolis* an article which is at once characteristic and instructive. It professes to be a mere account of the reception accorded to Ibsen and his works in Paris, but it is really a confession of faith (or unfaith) on the part of M. Sarcey himself. It is, to a certain extent, a narrative, but it is a narrative with comments so frequent and elaborate that what sets out as a history ends by becoming a sort of personal declaration. As such, it is eminently interesting. It enables us to get at M. Sarcey's point

of view as a critic of the theatre—to understand his intellectual position, to comprehend his mental limitations.

Let it be recognised at the outset that, *bourgeois* and *borné* as M. Sarcey admits himself to be, he is not without the ability to appreciate some of the merits of the Ibsen drama. He describes *A Doll's House* as "fort jolie et toute pleine de scènes qui sont d'une vérité et d'une grâce exquises." It is, he says, "une charmante comédie, et je ne serais pas étonné qu'elle finit par s'acclimater sur nos scènes de théâtres parisiens." This enthusiasm of his, obviously, is due at least partly to the fact that he claims *A Doll's House* as "une pièce française, faite avec des procédés que ne désavouerait point Sardou"—still, praise it he does. So of *The Wild Duck*: "Nous avions senti comme les autres l'extrême mérite de certaines parties de la pièce. Nous avions été très frappés de la vie intense dans ses personnages. Le rôle du photographe nous avait paru d'une observation curieuse; celui de l'illuminé Gegers d'un rendu étonnant; et combien délicieux celui de la petite Hedwig, cette jeune vierge scandinave si ingénue, si tendre, si rêveuse, avec un je ne sais quel goût de phraséologie mystique qui nous avait ravis." So, again, of *Brand*, M. Sarcey acknowledges that in that work there are "des traits de génie et deux scènes d'une incomparable beauté."

All this tends to show that M. Sarcey is no mere bigoted irreconcilable of the type which condemns the Ibsen theatre *en bloc*. It is clear, too, that he came to the consideration of that theatre with a mind warped and clouded, not only by provincial prejudice, but by a reaction against excessive *réclame*. The prejudice is frankly stated. *Ghosts* and *A Doll's House* had been published in 1889 in a French translation by M. Prozor; but, says M. Sarcey, "Les Français, et surtout les Parisiens, qui adorent le théâtre, ne se mettent presque jamais en peine de lire une œuvre dramatique qui n'a pas été jouée. . . Il ne faut pas nous demander de nous former une opinion sur un drame qui n'a pas subi l'épreuve de la rampe. Il n'existe pas pour nous—à plus forte raison si ce drame nous vient de l'étranger. Est-ce," continues M. Sarcey, "fatuité folle? est-ce sérieuse conviction de notre supériorité réelle dans les choses de l'art dramatique? Nous sommes persuades qu'il n'y a de théâtre que chez nous; que toutes les scènes de l'univers vivent de nos miettes, que dans cet ordre d'idées les étrangers ne comptent pas." It was bad enough that M. Sarcey should start with this sublime indifference to the "étranger;" it was still worse that the introducers, the exploiters, of a certain person from the North should still further repel this typical Parisian by blowing the Ibsen trumpet so loudly

and so long. "Quels panégyriques!" cries indignant M. Sarcey. It was as if the would-be popularisers of the Norwegian poet-playwright had cried out, "le soleil s'est levé; disparaissez, étoiles!" Apparently, the said popularisers were carried away by their enthusiasm, and forgot to be prudent. They did not attempt to conciliate M. Sarcey and men like him; "they called us idiots in advance." How far this was the fact I do not know; but, if fact it were, the procedure was sadly lacking in worldly wisdom.

Nor is this all. One sees that the native, the acquired, prejudice of M. Sarcey was increased and strengthened by the manner in which the Ibsen dramas were performed in Paris. There were no concessions to the weaker brethren. Absolute realism (it appears) was sought for in lowered lights and every-day methods of elocution. Poor M. Sarcey could not see, and could not hear! "C'est à peine si nous entendions une moitié du dialogue." "Nos metteurs en scène ne manquaient pas, aussitôt que se levait le rideau, de baisser la rampe, en sorte que les personnages avaient l'air d'ombres se promenent dans l'ombre."

This, it is evident, was too much for M. Sarcey, and helped to make him unfavourable to the new dramatist. It is, however, equally certain that under no conditions whatever could the Ibsen theatre have commended itself, as a whole, to a personality constituted as M. Sarcey's is. He is quite right, as well as quite honest, when he cries, "Je n'ai pas l'âme Ibsenienne . . . je manque d'imagination." Here he is speaking from his heart. M. Sarcey's opposition to the Ibsen drama is fundamental; it goes to the roots. We may put aside, as of minor importance, his objection to *Ghosts*, that there is nothing new in it but the word "revenants" ("c'est l'antique fatalité qui reparait sous les noms plus scientifiques d'hérédité et d'atavisme"), and his similar objection to *The Enemy of the People* and *The Master-Builder*, that they are based on "les lieux communs de la littérature romantique de 1828." M. Sarcey's quarrel is with all that is most characteristic in the method of the Norwegian master.

First of all, M. Sarcey dislikes in Ibsen the small measure of what, in the conventional drama, we call "action," "movement." This, he complains, is replaced by over-much talking. "Dans *Les Revenants* [*Ghosts*], comme dans la plupart des pièces d'Ibsen, tout se passe en conversations, en questions philosophiques agitées et débattues par des gens qui ne prennent pas soin de les expliquer clairement. Chacun des personnages exposait tour à tour son état d'âme, et"—and here you get a sidelight upon the narrowness of the critic's outlook—"ces âmes

nous paraissaient si extraordinairement différentes des notres, qu'il nous était presque impossible d'entrer dans les sentiments qui les animaient, de saisir les mobiles dont il étaient poussés." It will be seen that M. Sarcey is disturbed not only by the extent of the talk in Ibsen, but by what he regards as its obscurity. Things are not made sufficiently plain for him. He censures Ibsen for not "presenting" his personages more openly, for not "exposing" more clearly the "donnée" of his works. The characters come in and begin to gossip about their affairs before we know who they themselves are, and what their affairs may be. It is true that gradually, little by little, the characters reveal themselves, and the situation becomes comprehensible; "mais," cries M. Sarcey piteously, "ce n'est pas la pure et sereine clarté dont nous sentons le besoin." And then comes an utterance from the very depths of the veteran critic's being:—"Oh! que je préfère les belles et lumineuses ordonnances de nos pièces, où le sujet dès l'abord est clairement exposé, les personnages marqués de traits reconnaissables, où le reste se dèduit logiquement des prémisses, sans qu'il y ait jamais dans l'esprit de l'auditeur une hésitation ni une incertitude."

Here we have the bitter cry of the professional theatre-goer who has been nourished for the greater part of his life on the well-made play—the play of artifice, in which men and women are handled like counters in a game, and made to do that, and that only, which the playwright ordains for them—the play which is deliberately theatrical in its form, its tone, its expression. I am not saying a word against this species of drama, which has always existed, has a perfect right to exist, and is capable of yielding much pleasure to many. I am only regretting that M. Sarcey should have become so wedded to the method of Scribe, of Dumas, of Sardou, that he cannot recognise, or will not acknowledge, the freshness, the utility, the charm of the method of Ibsen. In the ordinary exercise of his duties as theatrical commentator M. Sarcey does well to put to himself, concerning the play, the question which he puts in regard to the Ibsen theatre: "Je voudrais bien savoir ce qu'en penserait le public, j'entends le vrai, le grand public." It is for "le grand public" that the daily journalist writes, and it is from the point of view of that public that he judges and pronounces sentence. "Le grand public," even now, knows little about the Ibsen theatre, and cares less. It would be absurd, therefore, to treat all dramatic productions from the Ibsen viewpoint. The big public wants melodrama, and domestic drama, and poetic drama—it wants comedy, and it wants farce; and to none of these could the Ibsen method usefully be applied. But that is no reason why

the critic should not keep his mind open, not only to the actualities but also to the possibilities of the Ibsen theatre, with its fondness for the psychological and the spiritual.

"Au théâtre," says M. Sarcey, in a very Sarceyan passage, "il n'y a que ce qu'on voit qui existe." Is this not rather an arrogant, not to say an ignorant, assertion? Is there no room, then, in the theatre for the unseen, the mystical, the nebulous, the suggestive? I am quite aware that there is in England "no money" in Ibsen (unless, indeed, there be some in *A Doll's House* and *An Enemy of the People*), any more than there is in Maeterlinck or Hauptmann; but the pecuniary standard is not always that of art. The question for students and enthusiasts is whether Ibsen does not broaden the basis of the drama—whether he does not introduce a new and interesting principle into dramatic art—whether, for the treatment of certain subjects, certain moods of thought and feeling, his method is not wonderfully well devised. In most plays the method is conventional, because the events of years, or months, or days have to be crowded into the three hours' traffic of the stage. Ibsen fixes upon a certain epoch in the lives of his creations, and into that space of time compresses the outcome, the result, of all that has gone before. In the every-day drama there is a catastrophe and a *dénouement*, both carefully led up to. Ibsen gives us the catastrophe and the *dénouement* without the usual preliminaries. He begins where most dramatists leave off, and so is able to approximate more closely to life and character as they are.

It is quite true that the Ibsen theatre does not make for mere diversion. The entertainment is purely intellectual. One cannot recommend any play of Ibsen's to those who desire simply to refresh and recruit their jaded minds. Ibsen demands the entire and unremitting attention of the auditor. Nothing in his dialogue can safely be neglected. If you fail to catch a sentence, you may miss a vital link in the chain of dramatic evidence. That, no doubt, is a mistake on the part of the Norwegian writer if he desires popularity, for, if you wish to carry the big public with you, you cannot be too perspicuous and emphatic. On the other hand, by curtailing to the utmost the time-limit of his "plots," Ibsen contrives to convey more vividly than any contemporary dramatic author the idea of absolute realism in word and deed. His people say and do at a given point exactly what they might be expected to say and do. Their talk may be allusive and not too easily mastered, but it is talk, nevertheless, of the most life-like sort, charged with the liveliest emotion. It is not in this way that one writes

drama of the "popular" pattern, but it is in this way that one writes drama of the realistic order—drama in which the mind and the soul of average individualities are laid bare for the inspection of those who care for studies in mental and spiritual pathology.

COPYRIGHT IN PERSONALITY.

By Malcolm Watson.

OUR beneficent and wise Legislature has secured to every man the property which, either by his own exertion or the generosity of others, has accrued to him. It has also conferred upon the inventor of any novelty the right, subject to certain formalities, of enjoying the hardly-won fruits of his labours. To counterfeit a registered trade-mark, to lay violent hands upon that which belongs to another, are acts that no person anxious to avoid the notoriety acquired by a sensational appearance in the dock is likely to perpetrate. All this is as it should be. Just as some people are born into the world lacking the proper colour-sense, so others enter and pass through it wholly unable from first to last to appreciate the difference existing between the words *meum et tuum*. It is to stimulate such persons to a due regard for their significance that laws have been enacted. In this way the happy possessor of a purse, however trashy it may be, can rest easy in his mind that, should it be stolen, he will have at least the sympathetic co-operation of the police on his side. Here, it will be observed, we have to deal with tangible articles. But there are other kinds of property of a less concrete description to which, unfortunately, equal indulgence is not extended. No one need be reminded of the difficulty experienced by novelists and playwrights in obtaining adequate protection for their ideas. That, however, is a question which has been so frequently and so exhaustively discussed that there is no need to do more than refer to it at present. Ideas, after all, are elusive things and not easy to define. Moreover, they have an uncomfortable knack of occurring to two or more persons at the same moment.

There is, on the other hand, a certain sort of property, of which the law, as now constituted, takes absolutely no cognisance. The title of this article sufficiently indicates to what I allude. "Copyright in Personality" is a meaningless term so far as it possesses any legal efficacy. Yet there exists one class of people whose chief stock-in-trade is their personality—who depend mainly upon it for their daily bread—who without it would be practically helpless. Of what elements exactl y it is composed it would be hard to say but that it enters largel

the question of an actor's or an actress's popularity there cannot be a doubt. To them it is what brains are to an author, hands to an artisan, eyes to a painter. The dramatic artist who cannot claim it as a possession will in these days never rise to greatness. Some, although few, there are who pin their faith to impersonation, but their hold upon the public is slight compared with that obtained by their more fortunate brethren. To be gifted with a personality is on the stage to be favoured in more senses than one by the gods.

In the circumstances it might be supposed that actors would be inclined to deal prudently with an article of such value; that they would hesitate to squander it uselessly; that they would endeavour in some way to establish a right to their own property. I have noticed recently that several papers have started a competition, in which the public is invited to take part, in order to decide who is the handsomest actor and who the prettiest actress on the metropolitan stage. I should like for a moment to ask what would be the sensations of those concerned were a rival journal to adopt this silly and impertinent fashion, and beg its readers to name the most vulgar-minded editor or the most scurrilous journalist in London. And as the vogue continued to spread, we should gradually be permitted to know who was the ugliest stockbroker, and who the most elegant member of Parliament. Did "Copyright in Personality" exist, a spectacle so offensive and degrading would certainly never be allowed. Imagine the feelings of the man who learns that the tag-rag and bob-tail of London have been requested to pronounce judgment upon his personal appearance, and that they have graciously agreed to acclaim him the handsomest among his fellows; or those of the actress, whose name, along with a hundred others, is carelessly flung to the rabble, in order that it may condescendingly declare which of the lot pleases it most. If good taste and courtesy will not suffice to hinder occurrences of the kind, surely there ought to be some way of protecting innocent people from exposure to such humiliation.

Yet, however we may condemn the editorial instinct that prompts its possessor to seek notoriety and an increased circulation by the least praiseworthy means, it will hardly be contended that its victims are entirely free from blame. In the words of Coventry Patmore, they fail only too often "to comprehend and wear the crown of their despised prerogative." The merchant who openly decries his own wares in the market-place can hardly be surprised if the public is quick to agree with him. The members of the theatrical profession have, in great measure, only themselves to thank for the freedom with which

their names are bandied about. And here I am tempted to pass from the general to the particular. Charity, we all know, is reputed to cover a multitude of sins, but there are some which even its protective mantle can neither conceal nor excuse. During the past month or two we have had a number of appeals made to the liberality of the public on behalf of deserving cases. Against these I have nothing to say. But there is one feature of such performances which calls for remark. That pretty young actresses should for the nonce constitute themselves programme-sellers is a circumstance peculiarly acceptable, no doubt, to the *blasé* playgoer. That they, however, should conduct themselves after the manner of the elderly harpies employed at the Paris theatres can only "make the judicious grieve." Obviously, they are trading upon their personality and in so far cheapening themselves. What is the result? The other day, to give an example, a number of young actresses consented to act in the capacity mentioned at a bazaar organised in aid of the funds of a well-known hospital. To their surprise and indignation, they were received by the authorities as menials, and treated accordingly. There is no need to particularise further, but I sincerely hope that the lesson will be taken as a useful warning. When actors and actresses show that they have ceased to respect themselves and their art, they must not be astonished if that section of the public which enjoys the command of more sovereigns than brains should hasten to profit by the circumstance.

I have quoted two examples as instances of what surely must be regarded by every right-minded person as a pernicious practice. In one case an actor finds himself involuntarily the subject of a competition which is an insult to himself, and a discredit to all participating in it. To make a raree-show of a man is in truth to degrade him to the level of a society beauty. In the other, actresses of their own accord contribute to an exhibition in which modesty has no place, and smiling rapacity wins the first prize. Do these young ladies, I wonder, ever reflect that by this cheapening of their personality they are helping materially to ruin their own prospects? In the old days an actor was seldom to be seen except behind the footlights. Such seclusion is, of course, no longer practicable in view of the publicity accorded by society and the press to his doings. Possibly he has gained, in a pecuniary sense, as much as, in an artistic one, he has lost by the change. But there is a point beyond which even he cannot afford to go. That point is reached when his features are exposed to public competition; when his face becomes the fortune of any cheap-jack editor who cares to put it up to auction. The fault, I am glad to declare, is not the actor's,

with whom one can only sympathise. But that such things should be possible renders the question inevitable,—If in other classes of property, why not also "Copyright in Personality"?

THE FATHER OF THE TERRYS.

By Arthur Escott.

THE welcome return of the Lyceum company to England has been marked by a sorrowful incident. Radiant over her unbroken succession of triumphs in the United States, eagerly looking forward to another meeting with her kinsfolk, and having no reason to suppose that she was on the eve of a heavy bereavement, Miss Ellen Terry, with Sir Henry Irving and other comrades, left New York on her homeward voyage on the 20th of May. On arriving at Liverpool she heard of the death of her father, which had occurred two or three days previously.

Mr. Benjamin Terry—he called himself Ben—had reached a good old age, having been born in the autumn of 1817. I understand that he was distantly related to that Daniel Terry who rose to distinction on the stage early in the present century, who for a short time was one of the lessees of the old Adelphi, who turned several of the Waverley novels into plays, and who aided Theodore Hook in not a few of his practical jokes. Becoming an actor by profession in his teens, Mr. Ben Terry achieved considerable success in the provinces, especially at Glasgow. He supported Macready in more than one piece, and at a later period was engaged by Charles Kean for the Princess's Theatre. In or about 1840 he married a clever and beautiful actress, Miss Ballard, of whom Macready, usually hard to please, had many pleasant things to say. Kean's historic management of the Princess's ended in 1859, and a few years afterwards, Mr. Terry, with his wife, retired into private life. Mrs. Terry, winsome to the last, died in 1892.

Though of no ordinary talents, Mr. Ben Terry will be remembered chiefly as the father of one of the most remarkable families known to our stage. Miss Kate Terry, Miss Ellen Terry, Miss Marion Terry, Miss Florence Terry, and Mr. Fred Terry were successively born to him. Partly owing to his influence, but still more to her own talents, the first was selected by Charles Kean to play Arthur in his revival of *King John* when she was only ten years of age. Subsequently, under the same management, she was Ariel in *The Tempest*, Cordelia in *King Lear*, and the Boy in *Henry V.* Before long she became one of the luminaries of her profession, from which, as a consequence of her

marriage to Mr. Arthur Lewis, she withdrew in 1867. Of Miss Ellen Terry—her successor in juvenile parts at the Princess's—it is needless to speak; both England and America hail her as the most representative actress of our time, and the verdict is not one to be set aside. Miss Marion Terry is a delightful exponent of true womanliness; Miss Florence Terry (Mrs. Morris), who died this year, developed a marked aptitude for the stage during a too-brief public career; Mr. Fred Terry does not fall below the high standard of art and taste which his sisters have raised. Another member of the family, Mr. Charles Terry, is the father of the clever child-actress in *A Man's Shadow*. Altogether, Mr. Ben Terry had much to brighten his declining years. Of venerable aspect, refined in manner, and unobtrusively proud of the gifts of his children, he will long be missed at important first-nights, particularly at the Lyceum.

THE LATE SHAH AT THE OPÉRA COMIQUE.

By F. C. Burnand.

"The death of the Shah recalls to mind an interesting incident in stage history. During his first visit to this country, in 1873, he was caricatured in a piece at the Opéra Comique, even to the extent of being introduced with a string of pawn-tickets round his neck. Down came the irate Lord Chamberlain upon the management for what was undoubtedly a breach of good taste, and Mr. Corrie, who represented his majesty, had to present irely different appearance."—*The Theatre*, June, 1896.

THE piece was mine. It was called *Kissi-Kissi*, brought out at the Opéra Comique during Mr. Hingston's management. The Lord Chamberlain had duly licensed it, and, therefore, had read the dialogue. Mr. Corrie, as it happened, was not unlike the Shah, and when he had darkened his complexion and assumed the costume the resemblance was striking. The house was crowded; the piece an immediate and unequivocal success. The next day the Lord Chamberlain threatened to stop its performance unless Mr. Corrie gave up his impersonation of the Shah. It was represented to the Licenser (Mr. W. B. Donne) that the actor happened facially to resemble his majesty. So Mr. Donne philosophically decided that all parties would be satisfied if Mr. Corrie did not darken his skin. Thereupon we made him white; yet, somehow, he looked more like the Shah than ever. The audience highly appreciated the joke, and laughed even more at the white-washed Shah than they had at him when he was a mahogany of the deepest dye. Finally he settled down into a whitey-brown, and, in this colour, enjoyed a

very long run. The French operetta which afforded the plot and music was *L'Ile de Tulipatan*. But in this there had been no Shah, and I quite forget how he was introduced.

MR. KUHE'S RECOLLECTIONS.

By H. Hamilton Fyfe.

A BOOK "by a musician about other musicians" is, as Mr. Kuhe remarks in his preface, something of a novelty; and in these days when the quest of "some new thing" is pursued as assiduously as ever it was by the Athenians of old, it is a favourable omen for a book that it breaks fairly new ground. And the omen which thus meets us at the outset is in this case fully justified by the result. Valuable as a record, and entertaining by reason of its pleasant gossip and neatly related anecdotes, *My Musical Recollections*, deserves to win a wide popularity. All who are privileged to know the author were confident that a volume of his reminiscences must prove highly interesting, and would bear the impress of the genial humour that distinguishes him; but few can have looked for such a wealth of memories, such a flow of capital "ana," a volume so comprehensive, or a style so happy. The fault one is inclined to find with the book is that too little is heard of Mr. Kuhe himself—of his own life, that is to say, his own struggles and triumphs, his own experiences on his way through the world of music. He is far from falling into the fault "of thrusting forward any one's identity to the exclusion of other and more interesting personalities;" but then this is a fault so often found in works of this kind that we ought not to complain, perhaps, when we find an author going to the opposite extreme.

When Wilhelm Kuhe, a young man of twenty-two, arrived in London in the year 1845, the musical condition of the English nation was very different from that of to-day. The concert-halls of the metropolis could be numbered upon the fingers of one hand. In the winter there were hardly any concerts at all, and the surfeit of May and June was balanced by musical starvation throughout the rest of the year. It was, of course, exceptional for a performer to be of English nationality, and the "foreign importations" sang and played the same pieces over and over again so often that their audiences, save at private parties, where everyone talked and no one istened, had their patience subjected to a severe strain.

Especially irritating to any one of discriminating taste was this habit of keeping to the same repertories by reason of the poor and uninteresting quality of the programmes. At miscellaneous concerts one heard mostly hackneyed operatic airs, ballads not of the best kind, and "instrumental solos of a character so trashy that anyone venturing to play them nowadays at a concert of any importance would run a serious risk of being hooted off the platform." The length of the programmes, too, was almost beyond belief. Concerts used to begin at half-past one in the afternoon, and the proprietors of St. James's Hall, when it was first built, had a clause in their agreements with concert-givers stipulating that the entertainment must not last beyond six o'clock! Sir Julius Benedict's concerts used, however, to continue till seven! This same readiness to give plenty for the public's money prevailed also at the Opera, where, on the occasion of Mr. Kuhe's first visit, he heard the whole of *Il Puritani*, then saw a ballet, next listened to a scene from *Lucia di Lammermoor*, and finally came away before the last item, consisting of another ballet. Mr. Kuhe tells an amusing story of one of his own concerts at which the programme was exceedingly long. At the end of it came *Ask Nothing More*, and one of the performers remarked quietly that he did not think it was likely the audience would ask anything more after sitting through twenty-four pieces. In 1845 it was quantity and not quality that was most in request.

Yet, what else could be expected when musical education was in such a half-alive condition? We have seen from the recently published *Life of Dr. Hawtrey* how, when he became headmaster of Eton, in succession to the redoubtable Keate, it was regarded as little better than waste of time to devote attention to any subject outside the classics; how mathematics had in the thirties only just begun to be recognised as a necessary branch of teaching; how even Hawtrey, the reformer, gravely doubted the possibility of ever having French and German placed in the regular course of study. So it was with music. Girls "learnt" it at boarding-schools, and went home to torture their friends' ears with "The Maiden's Prayer," or "The Battle of Prague;" boys got no musical training at all. In 1845, the Royal Academy of Music was the only important institution of its kind in London, or indeed in England. Fifty years has brought about a remarkable change in this direction, and with the spread of musical culture has come the establishment of those amateur vocal and orchestral societies which are doing such excellent work. Hardly a family now among what we call the upper-middle class but owns one or more girl music-students

—and students in earnest, devoted to music as an art, not merely as a lady-like diversion. Scarce a pupil at any of the great institutions such as the Royal Academy or the Royal College, or even those to be found in the provinces, who could not do what all the artists at the Italian Opera (save old Lablache) were unable to do in 1845—tell an A flat when they heard it sung. This Mr. Kuhe records as an undoubted fact —that when Pischek, the baritone, sang up to this note, only one of the assembled singers could be positive as to what it was! No, in spite of the greatness of the singers of those early days —and what a list of names it is that we find in the book, with something fresh and interesting told about nearly everyone!—in spite of the palmy days of opera (these came later) when London boasted two opera-houses. Mr. Kuhe is not in any degree a *laudator temporis acti* at the expense of the present. "The difference between 1845 and 1895 is wholly in favour of the present generation, and from one point of view of those who minister to their artistic wants."

The one point of view seems to be the remunerative. Many an instance does Mr. Kuhe give of the difference between fees and salaries paid in bygone days and salaries and fees paid now. This contrast was dealt with by Mr. Ernest Kuhe in his interesting article on the subject of "Singers and their Salaries" in *The Theatre* last August, so it is needless to dwell upon it now. But one may remark in passing that it seems hardly a strong argument to say: "The first time Sims Reeves appeared at a concert of mine in London I gave him, according to his terms, ten guineas. On the last occasion he sang for me in the metropolis he received 100 guineas." It is only natural that a veteran singer, who has held an assured position for a very long period, should be able to command a far larger price than a young artist, already popular, no doubt, but with the world yet to conquer.

To Mr. Sims Reeves, by the way, Mr. Kuhe devotes some very interesting pages. He is severe upon those who blame the great tenor for appearing in public after he was supposed to have retired finally, and hints plainly that it is a case of "necessity compels."

Is it conceivable, one might well ask, that an artist, nervous, highly strung, sensitive to the tips of his fingers, would undergo the ordeal of singing in public and courting comparative failure with the memory of past triumphs ever present in his mind, if necessity did not compel him to do so? And is not the very fact that an artist, who, so to speak, has had the world at his feet and carried all before him in days of yore, should be driven to this necessity, enough in itself to inspire feelings of deep commiseration and disarm censure? Let the plain truth be spoke. Those who talk so glibly about the "palmy

days" of Sims Reeves are seemingly oblivious to the fact that there was a time when artists, were they ever so great, did not and could not command the exorbitant and almost prohibitive terms which obtain nowadays on the concert platform and the lyric stage. In those "palmy days," even a public idol like Sims Reeves would not have dreamt in his wildest moments of asking more than 20 or 25 guineas for singing a few ballads or in an oratorio; and it was not till many years after—at a time when failing health often prostrated him with nervousness, and he was compelled again and again to disappoint audiences and thereby suffer heavy pecuniary losses—that he really obtained high terms. Indeed, I do not think I am outside the mark when I hazard the belief that he lost as much money by *not* singing as he ever made by fulfilling engagements.

Generosity is the keynote of Mr. Kuhe's references to those of his fellow-musicians about whom he writes. There is not an ill-natured word spoken of anyone, and when he cannot praise or dwell upon the amiable personal qualities of those with whom in the course of a long and honourable career he has come into contact, he touches their foibles lightly, and always with good humour. All the great singers, composers, conductors, and instrumentalists of the past half-century find a place in these pages. With nearly all who have attained any eminence in the musical profession during that period Mr. Kuhe has been personally acquainted, and, related in a bright, unassuming manner, his recollections at first hand are naturally of great interest. Among those who arouse his enthusiasm is Sir Arthur Sullivan—"the most versatile and prolific musician England has ever known." And he tells an amusing story to illustrate the wide popularity of the delightful *Mikado*. While he was staying with a friend in Germany, the son of the house arrived after a week's visit to Berlin. Questioned as to what plays and operas he had heard, he declared that he had been only to *The Mikado*. A friend had taken him to see it on the first night of his stay in the capital, and he had been so pleased with it that he spent each evening of the week in listening to Sullivan's music and applauding Gilbert's jokes. The father received the story with some doubt, but a few weeks afterwards he himself saw the piece at Frankfort, and then he at once expressed his entire belief in his son's account of his doings, and added that he no longer wondered at the boy's enthusiasm. Of Liszt, Mr. Kuhe has plenty to tell, and there are one or two stories that seem to be new of Von Bulow's trenchant wit; while of Rubinstein's peculiarities, of Jenny Lind's generosity and kindness, of Lablache's amusing adventures, of Madame Patti's triumphs, of Trebelli's fascination and humour, of Mario's magnificence, of Rossini's quaint ways, of the characteristics, in fact, of numberless notable people, we hear much that is new and entertaining.

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MR. CHARLES FULTON.

Portraits.

MR. CHARLES FULTON.

IN the subject of this little memoir we have another illustration of the class recently referred to by the Lord Chief Justice as gentleman playactors—of the group of rising actors who, originally intended for one of the learned professions, have been attracted to the stage, as we pointed out a few months ago, by the increased respect in which it has been held during the last quarter of a century. Mr. Charles Fulton, long dear to Adelphi audiences, is the eldest son of the late Mr. Edward Foss, Under-Sheriff of London in 1827-8, one of the founders of the Incorporated Law Society (of which he was President in 1842 and 1843), magistrate and deputy-lieutenant for Kent, and, above all, the author of so classic a work as the *Lives of the Judges of England*. Late in life he married Maria Elizabeth, eldest daughter of Mr. William Hutchins. Born in 1857, Mr. Charles Fulton, as he elects to call himself, was educated at Marlborough and on the Continent. Like his father, he was intended for the law, but never went to the Bar. He first appeared on the stage about thirteen years ago, under the management of Mr. Wilson Barrett. He made steady and continuous progress, obtaining before long a marked success as Thorold Tresham in Browning's *Blot on the Scutcheon*—a character, by the way, of enormous length. One of the most artistic of impersonations in a small way that the modern stage has seen was his Lord Asgarbey in Mr. Henry Arthur Jones's *Judah*, in which, at the Shaftesbury Theatre, Mr. Willard achieved one of his remarkable triumphs. For some years past Mr. Fulton has been a member of the Adelphi company, contributing in a marked way to the success which has usually rewarded their efforts. One of his brothers, Mr. George Foss, has also taken to the stage with excellent prospects. Mr. Fulton is the chairman of the committee of the Green Room Club, which may claim to be the most representative institution of its kind, and to the prosperity of which he has added in no slight degree. His favourite home is at Totteridge, in the fine Tudor house that was occupied by Lady Rachel Russell, after the execution of her husband, Lord William Russell, in 1683. Mr. Fulton is an English gentleman in the best sense of the term, and has the gifts to justify the supposition that he will take high rank as an actor.

At the Play.

IN LONDON.

THE hot weather has continued to exercise its baneful influence upon the attendance at the theatres, a circumstance of which the numerous changes of programme afford abundant although unpleasant proof.

"THE GREATEST OF THESE —."

A Play, in Four Acts, by SYDNEY GRUNDY. Produced at the Garrick Theatre, June 10.

Mr. Armitage, J.P. ..	Mr. KENDAL.	Grace Armitage ..	Miss NELLIE CAMPBELL.
Rev. Luke Dormer ..	Mr. H. KEMBLE.	Mrs. Cragg..	Mrs. CHARLES SENNETT.
Philip Curzon	Mr. NUTCOMBE GOULD.	Servant	Miss FRANCES OWEN.
Lawrence Armitage	Mr. RODNEY EDGCUMBE.	Mrs. Armitage	Mrs. KENDAL.

Mr. Grundy's latest play reveals the author in his most serious and didactic mood. The circumstance, we fear, is likely to militate against the prolonged prosperity of a piece which, by virtue of those very qualities that commend it to the earnest student of the stage, makes but a slender appeal to the general public. "*The Greatest of These* —" is a *pièce à thèse*. In writing it Mr. Grundy has unfortunately forgotten that the first law of the dramatist is to be dramatic. Apparently he has become so enamoured of his theme that other and equally important considerations have been permitted to drop out of sight, the result being a play which possesses both the merits and defects of a long sermon. Of action there is little, of controversial discussion much. Mr. Grundy, moreover, has committed the mistake of over-stating his case. In order to obtain the fullest measure of sympathy for the erring heroine, he has made her pharisaical husband a prig of such monumental proportions as to be almost incredible. Hypocrisy, so portrayed, becomes an ineffective caricature. These objections stated, it is pleasant to be able to congratulate Mr. Grundy upon the singularly earnest, thoughtful, and dignified character of his work, which we do not hesitate to say forms the most important contribution he has so far given to the stage. The story is simple. Ten years before its beginning, Mrs. Armitage, wife of a stern, unbending, and puritanical rigorist, had fled from her home with a certain Philip Curzon. Although readmitted to her husband's house, the fault has never been forgiven or forgotten. A promise has been exacted and granted that no further communication shall take place between the culprits. But the long arm of coincidence decrees that Lawrence,

Mrs. Armitage's beloved son, shall become involved in pecuniary difficulties, and that, having forged a bill in order to save himself, the document shall fall into Curzon's hands. Eager to rescue her boy from disgrace, Mrs. Armitage hastens to her old lover's chambers, where, unluckily, she is discovered by an interfering old clergyman, who at once reports the circumstance to her husband, at whose hands the unfortunate lady once more suffers banishment. Armitage eventually learns the real reason of his wife's visit to Curzon, and, moved by remorse, takes her back to his arms. The dialogue of the play, although one misses the author's accustomed touches of humour, is throughout of a noble and sustained character, and full of stimulating sentiment. In Mrs. Armitage, Mrs. Kendal finds a part admirably suited to her later and maturer method. Since she was last seen in London she has succeeded in toning down her excessive energy, and now acts with a quiet sincerity that is eminently effective. The mantle of the priggish husband sits somewhat uneasily on Mr. Kendal's shoulders—one can hardly believe in the reality of his harsh and unforgiving creed—but Mr. Kendal in any but a genial part must always be something of an anomaly. The remaining members of the cast were all excellent.

Magda.

A Play, in Four Acts, by Hermann Sudermann, faithfully translated from the original by Louis N. Parker. Produced at the Lyceum Theatre, June 3.

Leopold Schwartze	Mr. James Fernandez.	Heffterdingk ..	Mr. Forbes Robertson.
Magda	Mrs. Patrick Campbell.	Dr. von Keller ..	Mr. Scott Buist.
Marie	Miss Sarah Brooke.	Professor Beckmann	Mr. Murray Hathorn.
Augusta	Mrs. E. H. Brooke.	Von Klebs	Mr. J. Fisher White.
Franziska von Wendlowski	Miss Alice Mansfield.	Frau von Klebs ..	Miss Bessie Page.
		Frau von Ellrich	Miss Abbott Fuller.
Lieut. Max von Wendlowski.. ..	Mr. Frank Gillmore.	Frau Schumann	Miss De Burgh.
		Theresa	Miss Marianne Caldwell.

So much has been written and said regarding Sudermann's now well-known drama, *Heimat*, that we may be excused for not re-entering here upon the subject at any length. The version presented at the Lyceum under the title of *Magda* is announced as a "faithful translation" by Mr. Louis N. Parker, who, we hasten to say, has done his work with great skill and tact. Nevertheless, it is impossible not to recognise that the play suffers materially by a change of atmosphere. Typically German as it is in every respect, one must be imbued with the spirit of the Fatherland fully to comprehend its significance. The tyranny exercised by old Schwartze over his family would scarcely be understood among us, and if understood would at once be resented. For these and other reasons, *Magda* can never appeal to an English audience with such force as to a German one. The play, nevertheless, possesses brilliantly dramatic moments, otherwise it

would scarcely have attracted the attention of three artists so famous as Madame Sarah Bernhardt, Signora Duse, and Mrs. Patrick Campbell. Of these we must admit regretfully that the last is the least satisfactory in the title-part. Mrs. Campbell appears to forget that there is such a thing as dignity in passion. Her Magda is more or less a replica of her Second Mrs. Tanqueray, although the characters differ greatly in more regards than that of mere nationality. Mrs. Campbell, notwithstanding, has given us nothing finer than her scene with Von Keller in the third act. It is to be regretted that the high level which she reaches there is not maintained throughout. As the uncompromising father, Mr. James Fernandez, if he does not quite make us forget Herr Adolph Klein, gave a forcible and highly-strung performance that only suffered from a slight tendency towards over-deliberation. Of the various representatives of Heffterdingk, the kind-hearted clergyman, Mr. Forbes Robertson is quite the best. None has shown in so marked a degree the earnest, persuasive, and lovable nature of the man. Mr. Scott Buist furnished a carefully-finished portrait of Von Keller, while Mr. Frank Gillmore made a manly young lieutenant.

The School for Scandal.

Revival of Sheridan's Comedy at the Lyceum Theatre, June 20.

Sir Peter Teazle ..	Mr. William Farren.	Moses	Mr. Fred Thorne.
Sir Oliver Surface..	Mr. Edward Righton.	Snake	Mr. Sydney Warden.
Sir Benjamin Backbite	Mr. Cyril Maude.	Trip	Mr. Norman Forbes.
		Sir Harry Bumper..	Mr. Jack Robertson.
Joseph Surface ..	Mr. Forbes Robertson.	Sir Toby	Mr. J. S. Crawley.
Charles Surface ..	Mr. Fred Terry.	Lady Teazle ..	Mrs. Patrick Campbell.
Crabtree	Mr. Arthur Wood.	Mrs. Candour ..	Miss Rose Leclercq.
Careless	Mr. Frank Gillmore.	Lady Sneerwell ..	Miss Henrietta Watson.
Rowley	Mr. Charles Dodsworth.	Maria	Miss Sarah Brooke.

It is, unfortunately, becoming more and more apparent that our young actors and actresses possess little sympathy with, or appreciation of, the old school of comedy, of which Sheridan's masterpiece is an enduring example. In Mr. William Farren we have an artist who, on the other hand, understands and is able to give form and substance to the modes and manners of the last century. From his father and his grandfather he has inherited the traditions that cling around such parts as Sir Peter Teazle and Sir Anthony Absolute, of which he is now practically the only living representative. The management of the Lyceum is, accordingly, lucky in having succeeded in securing his services for the latest revival of *The School for Scandal*. Upon his performance as Sir Peter it would be superfluous to comment. At every point it conforms to the requirements of the character. In it humour and dignity are combined with the finest effect, while in presence of the actor one seems to breathe the very atmosphere of the eighteenth century. Unhappily, Mr. Farren stands almost alone

in this respect. Mr. Edward Righton's Sir Oliver is, it is true, modelled on excellent lines, and shows clearly that he has studied in the same school as Mr. Farren. But, apart from these two, the Lyceum revival reveals a plentiful lack of the true spirit of old comedy. Mrs. Patrick Campbell, in particular, as Lady Teazle, shows that even the charm of a fascinating personality is powerless to reconcile us to a reading of which modernity is the chief and most striking feature. In her performance we miss also any hint or suggestion of the country girl "who never knew luxury beyond one silk gown, nor dissipation above the annual gala of a race ball." Frankly, we begin to fear, although we still hope to be converted, that Mrs. Campbell is an actress merely of one part, and that she can only play—Mrs. Patrick Campbell. Mr. Forbes Robertson's Joseph is an exceedingly thoughtful and careful study; while Mr. Fred Terry makes a sprightly, genial, and vivacious Charles. Mr. Cyril Maude gives an amusing sketch of Sir Benjamin, albeit his continuous giggle becomes at last a trifle irritating, and Miss Rose Leclercq a characteristic rendering of Mrs. Candour. For the rest, if the cast fails in one or two unimportant respects, it is, at any rate, as thoroughly adequate as one can hope to secure in these days, when the donning of patch and wig has become an obsolete fashion.

Carmen.

A Dramatic Version, in Four Acts, of Prosper Mérimée's Novel, by Henry Hamilton. Produced at the Gaiety Theatre, June 6.

Don José Libengoa	Mr. Charles Dalton.	Beppo	Mr. T. Courtice.
Don Manoel Sarceda	Mr. Thomas Kingston.	Dolores	Miss Lena Ashwell.
Lucas Mendez	Mr. Luigi Lablache.	Lisa	Miss Eva Williams.
Bernal D'Aila	Mr. J. R. Crauford.	Anita	Miss Helena Dacre.
Priest	Mr. Acton Bond.	Teresa	Miss Alexes Leighton.
Pedro Diaz	Mr. George Humphrey.	Inez	Miss May Marshall.
Dancaire	Mr. G. R. Foss.	Juana	Miss Madge Meadows.
Remendado	Mr. Graeme Goring.	Carmen	Miss Olga Nethersole.
Lillas Pastia	Mr. Albert Sims.		

When it is stated that *Carmen* was withdrawn after a fortnight's run, enough, perhaps, has been said to indicate the general trend of public opinion regarding the piece. For ourselves, we can only express our hearty satisfaction at the result. It is indeed difficult to speak in moderate terms of a performance that outrages good taste and good sense at every turn. Let us in fairness add that the adapter is in this respect less to be blamed than the principal artist concerned. Mr. Hamilton, it is true, has sufficient to answer for without taking the responsibility of another's sins upon his shoulders. His "dramatic version" of Merimée's well-known story is tedious, cumbersome, and commonplace. But it is not inherently vulgar. This element it was left for Miss Olga Nethersole to supply. The task could not have been entrusted to more capable hands. Miss Nethersole is nothing if not thorough. Her conception of Carmen is that

of a gutter-bred wanton, lavish of hideous winks and suggestive leers. With misdirected conscientiousness she provides a portrait of such a creature, executed in colours that leave nothing to the imagination of the spectator. The subject is too repulsive to be dwelt upon. Miss Nethersole is a clever actress within certain limits. But she may be assured she is more likely to ruin than to enhance her reputation by exhibitions of such a description. The public is always ready to welcome talent; it has even a wholesome love for eccentricity; for mere monstrosity, however, it has no liking. In the clearest and most convincing manner it has shown that it will not have this Carmen at any price. The lesson, we sincerely trust, will not be lost upon Miss Nethersole.

Of Mr. Hamilton's share of the work we have incidentally spoken. Although free to draw liberally both upon the novel and the opera, his "dramatic version" is anything but a successful effort. The story is altogether too thin to furnish material for a four-act play, nor is its tenuity rendered less apparent by the author's trick of overburdening it with a quantity of words. Again and again, scenes evidently intended to impress by a sense of tragedy only served to provoke laughter, while, owing to the artists' disinclination to "speak up," much that might perhaps have been effective went for nothing. Against the growing feeling of depression, Mr. Charles Dalton, as Don José, battled bravely. Although there was little in his performance to suggest the fiery and impetuous Basque, he acted, at any rate, with consistent force and energy. Miss Lena Ashwell gave a pretty and pleasing sketch of José's sweetheart, Dolores. Her monotonous method of diction and awkward carriage seriously tend, however, to counterbalance her natural gifts. Miss Alexes Leighton, on the other hand, scored heavily by her clever acting and clear enunciation at a moment when it required exceptional ability to hold the attention of the audience. The remaining characters were little more than sketches, but it would be unjust to pass over without a word of praise the Don Manoel of Mr. Thomas Kingston, the Lucas Mendez of Mr. Luigi Lablache, or the Lisa of Miss Eva Williams.

The Queen's Proctor.

A Comedy, in Three Acts, by Herman Merivale, adapted from *Divorçons*, by MM. Victorien Sardou and E. De Najac. Produced at the Royalty Theatre, June 2.

Sir Victor Crofton, Bart., M.F.H. ..	Mr. Arthur Bourchier.	Gardener..	Mr. Metcalfe Wood.
The O'Paque, M.P.	Mr. Henry Bayntun.	Boy	Master Bottomley.
Cæsar Borgia ..	Mr. W. G. Elliot.	Lady Crofton ..	Miss Violet Vanbrugh.
Joseph Popplecombe	Mr. Ernest Hendrie.	Lady Roller.. ..	Miss E. Scott Daymar.
Reddie	Mr. Mark Kinghorne.	The Hon. Miss Pilkington.. ..	Miss Helen Rous.
Thompson	Mr. Charles Troode.	Mrs. Maydew ..	Miss Mabel Beardsley.
Stokes	Mr. Henry Kitts.	Williams	Miss Katharine Stewart.

It is pleasant to meet once more with the name of so skilful

and witty a writer as Mr. Herman Merivale on a London playbill. It is even more pleasant to find that, despite his recent illness, he retains all his old powers of brilliancy and humour. If *Divorçons* had to be turned into English, it could hardly have been more effectively done than in *The Queen's Proctor*. Personally, we are disposed to think that it would have been wiser to preserve the French *locale*, and to allow the characters to retain their original nationality. Mr. Merivale believes otherwise, and we are quite prepared to admit that he has grappled fairly successfully with the difficulties in his way. Even he, however, has been unable to avoid all the pitfalls that beset the path of the ready adapter, or to elude the incongruities that inevitably arise in the process of converting an essentially French comedy into an English one. Such slight defects an audience anxious only to be amused takes little account of, however. The story of *Divorçons* is too familiar to require reproduction here. Enough that Mr. Merivale has transplanted it to an English hunting county, and by making his principal character a M.F.H., contrived to introduce considerable local colour into the piece. The audience also is asked to admit the somewhat improbable postulate that "a Bill to make divorce possible by mutual consent on reasonable grounds, and so to dispense with the intervention of the Queen's Proctor, is supposed to have been brought before the House of Commons." Starting from this premiss, Mr. Merivale's version follows with tolerable closeness the course of the original piece. It has, moreover, the advantage of being well acted, particularly by Miss Violet Vanbrugh as Stella, Mr. W. G. Elliot as Borgia, and Mr. Mark Kinghorne as a Scotch waiter. As Sir Victor Crofton, Mr. Arthur Bourchier started rather heavily, but gradually acquired greater lightness of touch as the performance proceeded.

The Sunbury Scandal.

An Original Farcical Comedy in Three Acts, by Fred Horner. Produced at Terry's Theatre, June 11.

Sir John Quaill, M.P.	Mr. Frederick Kerr.	Magistrate's Clerk ..	Mr. L. Power.
William Joyce	Mr. E. W. Garden.	Tomkins	Mr. Herbert E. Terry.
Carl Rottenstein ..	Mr. Robb Harwood.	Inspector Joyce ..	Mr. W. J. Robertson.
Captain Wilfred Quaill	Mr. Wilfred Draycott.	Police Sergeant ..	Mr. John Gomah.
Horace Binks	Mr. G. E. Bellamy.	Lady Quaill	Miss Fanny Brough.
James Ostler, Esq., J.P.	Mr. Gilbert Farquhar.	Hon. Constance Cowley	Miss Maude Millett.

With the best will in the world, we are unfortunately forced to confess our inability to give any coherent account of the plot which Mr. Fred Horner has woven into his farcical comedy, *The Sunbury Scandal*. And while we cheerfully admit this to be our misfortune, we humbly contend that the fault lies chiefly with the author. Even the warmth of a sultry evening failed to dull our attention for a moment—more persistent and eager listeners than

ourselves no playwright could desire to have. Yet as the minutes passed, as the characters came and went, over all hung a cloud of mental obscurity from which there seemed no possible escape. As a last resource, let us endeavour, however, to give some slight indication of the course of the story by a series of questions. Why, then, did Sir John Quaill, M.P., and the Honourable Constance Cowley go up the river together against the wish of the former's wife? Why did Lady Quaill elect to meet her stockbroker at the very hotel they had chosen for lunching at? What induced Mr. Horace Binks to appear upon the scene? Upon what grounds did Sir Francis Jeune grant Lady Quaill a decree *nisi* from her first husband, and why did that gentleman disappear? By what means was Mr. Beerbohm Tree persuaded to play the part of Carl Rottenstein under the name of Mr. Robb Harwood? Is it customary for ladies to plead at police-courts in wig and gown? And, finally, what were the reasons which led to the propagation and eventual elucidation of that remarkable conglomeration of circumstances destined to go down to posterity as the Sunbury Scandal? Anyone who will satisfactorily answer this last question may consider himself exempt from reference to the others. Personally, we recognize the hopelessness of entering for a competition that would have taxed the logical powers of John Stuart Mill. If hard and unflagging endeavour could have secured the success of the piece, Miss Fanny Brough would certainly have accomplished that desirable result, but save in the police-court scene her efforts were handicapped by the incomprehensibility of her part. Miss Maude Millett is seen to greater advantage in comedy than in broad farce, for which her refined method is hardly suited. Mr. Fred Kerr, although much on the stage, had little to do; while in minor characters Mr. E. W. Garden, Mr. Gilbert Farquhar, and Mr. Herbert E. Terry, a son of the well-known comedian, Mr. Edward Terry, proved fairly successful.

Josiah's Dream.

An Original Farcical Comedy, in Three Acts, by Charles Rogers. Produced at the Strand Theatre, May 21.

Josiah Jenkins ..	Mr. Sidney Harcourt.	Caroline	Miss Ada Branson.
Algy Gushington ..	Mr. Graham Wentworth.	Georgina	Miss Lettice Fairfax.
Charlie Templeton	Mr. J. A. Bentham.	Johanna Bucklaw ..	Miss Mary Allestree.
John Hardy ..	Mr. George Raiemond.	Frederica	Miss Florence L. Forster.
William	Mr. Richard Blunt.		

Mr. Charles Rogers can hardly claim originality for the ground-idea of his farce. The notion of placing the action of a story in the dim future has been used times without number, alike by novelist and playwright. Nor is it possible to rank the present attempt among the successful ones. The author of *Josiah's*

Dream, having laid his scene in the year 2001, has been content to relegate the male sex to bloomers and bonnets, the female to trousers and hats, and to make each ape the manners of the other. To anything in the form of plot he barely condescends. In the circumstances, it is hardly surprising if the joke was quickly found to outwear its welcome. As a matter of fact, the piece disappeared into the limbo of things forgotten after a fortnight's run, and consequently calls for no extended notice. A similar remark is applicable to the acting.

Playing the Game.

A Musical Farcical Comedy, in Three Acts, by Willie Young and Arthur Flaxman, composed by Fred Eplett. Produced at the Strand Theatre, June 11.

Earl Penruddock ..	Mr. J. S. Blythe.	Col. Michael O'Clancey	Mr. Rupert Rusden.
Countess Penruddock	Miss Marion Sterling.	Mrs. O'Clancey	Miss Nelli Newton.
Lord Peter Penruddock	Mr. J. W. Bradbury.	Emmerson O'Clancey	Mr. Deane Brand.
Lady Amy Penruddock	Miss Violet Darrell	Lady Nesta Danby ..	Miss Kate Chard.

Playing the Game is in the nature of a Christy Minstrel entertainment, and, as such, may possibly please provincial audiences, for whose delectation it is avowedly intended. The thread of a story which runs through the farce is based upon a fairly humorous idea, which might, however, have been developed to better advantage. It deals with the dilemma into which the noble family of Penruddock is plunged by the disappearance of their servants at the moment of the arrival of the O'Clanceys, American millionaires, to whom they have let their house. In the emergency the Penruddocks undertake the duties of the vanished menials, with results that may be imagined. The boisterous humour of the piece received a rough-and-ready interpretation at the hands of the company engaged.

A Rescued Honour.

A Dramatic Comedy, in Three Acts, by Arthur Fry. Produced at the Avenue Theatre, June 4.

Bertie Clifford ..	Mr. Charles Weir.	Tommy Tabor ..	Mr. George Marlowe.
Noah Drayton ..	Mr. Cecil Morton York.	Clara Clifford ..	Miss Agnes Knights.
Dr. Deprez.. ..	Mr. Webb-Darleigh.	Agnes	Miss May Cross.
Fred Hanbury ..	Mr. Gordon Harvey.	Aunt Harvey ..	Miss Isabel Gray.
Uncle Harvey ..	Mr. George Mudie.	Peggy Barton ..	Miss Charlotte Morland.
Holmes	Mr. J. W. Ryder.	Simpson	Miss Violet Ackhurst.
Richard Barton ..	Mr. Albert E. Raynor.	Alice Barton ..	Miss Decima Moore.
Reuben Drake ..	Mr. Owen Harris.		

In *A Rescued Honour* the author relies upon the old and somewhat discredited trick of plunging his *dramatis personæ* into a sea of troubles, from which they are saved by the easy process of explaining that the whole thing was a dream. Nor does he reveal any marked ingenuity in his manner of manipulating this familiar and worn-out device. The story merely supplies another instance of a married man abandoning his wife and home for the pleasure of flirting, and eventually eloping with a miller's pretty

daughter. When at last the feelings of the spectators have been sufficiently harrowed, and ruin stares the hero in the face, he is graciously permitted to awaken from his nightmare to find himself in the arms of his sympathetic wife. Despite the unreality of the play, the performers did their utmost to give it tangible shape.

His Relations.

An Original Farcical Comedy, in Three Acts, by H. A. Saintsbury. Produced at the Avenue Theatre, May 28.

Major Gerald Faraday	Mr. Walter McEwan.	Gertie Fitz-Coolington	Miss Florence Fordyce.
Edward Fitz-Coolington	Mr. H. A. Saintsbury.	Rose Maydue ..	Miss Audrey Ford.
Frederick Lake ..	Mr. J. Farren-Soutar.	Jennings	Miss Marianne Caldwell.
Thomas Pinker	Mr. W. Cheesman.	Jenny Montgomery	Miss Dorothy Chesney.
Matthew Barlings ..	Mr. Frank Wood.		
Morgan	Mr. Graham Price.		

Edward Fitz-Coolington is a gentleman who so thoroughly detests the idea of anything in the shape of a relation that he marries a young lady solely for the reason that she possesses none of these encumbrances. Disillusion speedily follows. On all sides relations spring up with the rapidity of mushrooms, until the unfortunate man is almost driven into madness. That, in a nutshell, is the story of Mr. Saintsbury's farcical comedy. As it is not likely ever to be heard of again, we may be excused any further pronouncement upon its merits or defects. Of the acting it is enough to say that it was as good—or as bad—as the piece.

Madame Sarah Bernhardt's Season.

As a matter of record, the reappearance of Madame Sarah Bernhardt at the Comedy Theatre on the evening of June 8th demands mention. But as no new play was produced during her short season of twelve nights, any necessity for criticism is rendered unnecessary. Starting with a revival of *Adrienne Lecouvreur*, the great French actress appeared successively in *Magda*, *La Tosca*, *Fédora*, and *La Dame aux Camélias*. Upon her familiar impersonations of the leading characters in each of these it would be superfluous to comment. It may be said, however, that Madame Bernhardt returns to us as accomplished an artist as ever. Only physically is any change apparent. For she no longer possesses the slim, gossamer figure playgoers knew of old. The terrible fact has indeed to be faced at last—Madame Bernhardt is growing stout. So long, however, as the circumstance has no deterioriating influence upon her art, there is no need to regret it.

The Opera.

In the entire absence of novelties, the feature of the Opera season so far has been the presentation of various works by Wagner in various languages. We have had *Tannhäuser* in French, *Lohengrin* in German and Italian, *Die Meister-*

singer in Italian, *Die Walküre* in French, and lastly (though too late for notice here), *Tristan und Isolde* in German. Of these the most successful production has been that of *Die Meistersinger*, which has drawn overflowing houses each night it has been given. The performance, indeed, was the most finished and satisfying ever witnessed at Covent Garden, whether regarded from a vocal or an instrumental standpoint. To the ideal Walther of M. Jean de Reszke was now added, for the first time here, the supremely fine Hans Sachs of his brother Edouard; while the charming Eva of Madame Emma Eames, the admirable Beckmesser of Mr. David Bispham, the David of M. Bonnard, the Poyner of M. Plançon, and the Magdalena of Mdlle. Bauermeister were also noteworthy features in a memorable cast. To crown all, the orchestra and chorus did work of the highest excellence, the former displaying a measure of refinement and restraint that Signor Mancinelli had never previously succeeded in attaining where the score of *Die Meistersinger* was concerned. For the French representations opera-goers were indebted (or otherwise) to that capital tenor, M. Alvarez, who has hitherto resisted every inducement to sing in any language but his own. The result was less open to objection in the case of *Tannhäuser* than in that of *Die Walküre*, though in both instances M. Alvarez profited well enough by the arrangement. His Tannhäuser and his Siegmund are alike embodiments of exceptional merit, and it may be questioned whether in a vocal sense they can be surpassed (M. Jean de Reszke has never sung either rôle). On the other hand, in the *Nibelungen* music-drama the French text proved entirely unsuited to Wagner's curious alliterative verse, and therefore quite ineffective for declamatory purposes. In the part of Sieglinde a fairly successful *début* was made by the well-known Polish soprano, Mlle. Lola Beeth; she looked the character to perfection and acted it splendidly, but as a singer she was heard to greater advantage in her subsequent impersonations of Elizabeth and Elsa. Towards the middle of the month Madame Melba made her *rentrée* in *Roméo et Juliette*, and was welcomed with the utmost enthusiasm. Her singing was distinguished by all its wonted beauty of tone and charm and finish of method, so that once more the Australian prima donna contrived to share honours with the greatest living tenor in an opera which they have now virtually made their own.

IN THE PROVINCES.

Sir Henry Irving returned to London towards the end of May, and on June 1st, at Liverpool, began a short provincial

tour in *The Merchant of Venice*. "The circumstances," said the *Daily Post*, "under which, at Drury Lane, more than eighty years ago, Edmund Kean emerged from misery and obscurity into the full light of fame as Shylock, appear, when contrasted with the Lyceum version of the play, to mark, and that most strongly, the immense advance made by the British theatre, if not in the genius of acting, at all events in those accessories which, according to our present ideas, properly surround and dignify a noble art. One of a series of revivals which will always mark an epoch in dramatic history in England, this, from its spectacular side, has been well compared to 'some rich Eastern dream, steeped in colours, and crowded with exquisite figures of enchantment.' And we recognise that it is in no spirit of vain display that the beautiful costumes have been copied from the paintings of Titian and Veronese or that the scenery represents in faithful detail some of those exquisite vistas which throw over Venice a spell of unfading allurement. Not in any purposeless sense have Shakspere's conceptions been clothed with something approaching an adequate measure of usual beauty. We recognise it as due to a lofty conception of the functions and influence of the stage, a conception loftier, perhaps, and certainly more complete, than any to which a great actor has yet ventured to pledge his faith. In saying this we state Sir Henry Irving's position in relation to the British theatre in the widest terms. In what degree the same conception has its influence upon Sir Henry Irving's achievements as an actor would be an interesting question. Certainly no man can do excellently in an art who does not think it worthy of his utmost efforts, and does not reverence it accordingly. Each of Sir Henry Irving's creations may be called an 'utmost.' Not least his Shylock. This part, we may venture to say, has had fewer great exponents than any other important character of Shakspere. What is clear about the impersonation is its increasing depth and intensity from first to last, from the grim comedy with which Shylock proposes the terms of his bond to that moment when, ashen with agony, he staggers from the court shattered and undone." "Sir Henry Irving's assumption of Shylock," the *Mercury* remarks, "retains in its entirety the power which constitutes this one of the most remarkable of his studies in the domain of Shakspere. To him is due, in the largest measure, the later restoration of the theatre to its true position as a factor in art and morals." The *Daily Post*, speaking of a performance of *The Bells*, describes the Mathias as "essentially a creation." "Of Sir Henry Irving," the critic continues, "it is characteristic in a

greater degree than of any other actor, that the strongest points of his impersonations are sometimes those which were judged the weakest in the play; and what greater vindication could there be of acting as one of the fine arts?" *King Arthur*, in common with all the plays given by the company, met with a most enthusiastic reception, and was described in detail by nearly all the Liverpool papers.

From Liverpool Sir Henry Irving went to Manchester, appearing there on the 8th. "Unquestionably," says the *Courier* on the 10th, "the great event of the dramatic year in Manchester was the first performance last evening in this city at the Theatre Royal of *King Arthur*. Such a theme is by no means new, but the subject lends itself to excellent treatment, and while it contains all the elements of love and romance, it possesses intense human interest. In clothing the play with a beautiful picturesque setting, Sir Henry Irving has never before shown such wonderful skill in regard to detail. The various scenes unfolded pictures of surpassing grandeur, singularly appropriate, and in perfect accord with the requirements of the piece. Sir Henry Irving in the titular part impressed all with his kingly dignity, and in the varying moods which the character demanded his acting could not have been more true to nature. In the third act, where he learns of the faithlessness of his wife, his anguish knew no limits, and his dramatic genius at this point reached a high level of art which called forth prolonged and genuine applause. The part of the repentant Queen was invested by Miss Ellen Terry with that womanly grace which has always characterised her efforts." The *Guardian* did not care very much for the play, but was constrained to admit that the scene in the second act, "where the impression of a sloping beech-wood, with broken ground and undulations, is wonderfully conveyed, will probably mark an epoch in English scene-painting. As Lancelot stood for a moment erect in the archway, with the light glinting on the edges and bosses of his armour, and the whole figure framed, as it were, against the violet background, the sight was one which eyes weary of the ordinary glare and tinsel of the stage will long remember."

Next came a visit to Edinburgh, beginning on the 15th. *The Bells*, like other pieces in the repertory, has lost none of its former fascination here. "In Mr. Irving's hands," the *Scotsman* said, "this psychological study, as it might be called, of the outer and inner life of the Alsatian burgomaster who killed the Polish Jew, and of the torturings of an awakened conscience, loses nothing as time goes on in intensity and power. As was hinted regarding his Shylock, so it might with equal truth be said as to his Mathias,

that it was last night further enriched by the fruits of experience. The attempt to keep up a cheerful exterior to the world by a man with the mark of Cain not only on his brow, but burned into his heart, the dreaminess of manner and absent-mindedness which could not be shaken off, the fearful self-communings of Mathias, were depicted with vivid and dramatic force; and an additional tenderness, it almost seemed, was given by Sir Henry to the expression of the burgomaster's great love for his daughter, and to the feverish anxiety to see her united to the handsome officer who is to be his shield should danger arise. The dream trial scene of the last act, with its ghostly figures and its weird lights and shadows, riveted attention as usual by the gruesomeness of its realism. In it Sir Henry was tragic and grand. His face, on which the highest light fell amid prevailing gloom, was, as Mathias was questioned by the judges, and put to sleep by the mesmerist, a changing picture of the phases of torture to which a human soul may be subjected, and the death had a ghastliness of effect not easy to banish from the mind."

IN PARIS.

The past month has not been such a poor one as might be expected at the fag-end of the Paris season. *Nuit d'Amour*, by MM. Maxime Boucheron and Albert Barré, a fantaisie lyrique at the Bouffes Parisiens, with music by M. Antoine Brandès; *La Brébis*, a comedy, in two acts, by M. Edmond Sée; and *Le Tandem*, by MM. Leo Trézenik and Pierre Soulaine, at the Théâtre de l'Œuvre; *La Lépreuse*, a legendary tragedy, in three acts, by M. Henry Bataille, at the Comédie Parisienne; *Demi-sœurs*, a comedy, in three acts, by M. Gaston Devore, at the Théâtre des Escholiers; and an adaptation of M. Zola's *Au Bonheur des Dames* at the Gymnase, form a not contemptible balance-sheet. Most of these pieces, however, are due to the enterprise of the little independent companies which now are becoming numerous in Paris. They give a single representation, and disappear till they are ready with another.

Such welcome performances can hardly be expected to reach a high degree of perfection; but occasionally the pieces in themselves are interesting, and bring to the fore new authors whom more responsible theatrical companies with large general expenses would hardly venture to champion. This is the case with M. Gaston Devore's *Demi-sœurs*. It is the first, and a really remarkable, drama of a young man. The story, which is treated with delicacy and pathos, is that of a rather weak and gentle

woman, who marries, in succession, two men of totally different character, by each of whom she has a daughter. To one of these the first husband has transmitted his mild idealism; the second his sombre energy. The conflict of these transmitted qualities, and the incapacity of the mother to grapple with them and her own conflicting feelings, is treated with a masterly grip, of which the audience did not fail to show their appreciation. The matter-of-fact aunt's interjection, that what these three over-sensitive women needed was to feel the hand of a strong man to turn them to the right-about, gives the note of common-sense one feels to be wanting in a company composed exclusively of women. The piece will no doubt find its way later to one of the permanent theatres.

The adaptation of M. Zola's *Au Bonheur des Dames* is what is called a *pièce à spectacle*. It shows the inner life and throb of one of those immense shops in Paris known as the *grands magasins*, but the piece, despite its realism, was not received with the interest which some similar spectacular pieces have evoked—perhaps because a *grand magasin* has none of the mystery in which Worth's and other such fashionable places are wrapped for the general public. At the prettily-decorated little Théâtre-Salon, in the Rue Chaptal, the performance of Paul Verlaine's *Les Uns et les Autres* will interest the late poet's admirers.

IN BERLIN.

The dead season has arrived, and there is nothing of much interest now taking place in the German theatres. At the Royal Opera House, Berlin, Philipp Rufer's four-act opera, *Ingo*, has been brought out. The composer is a gifted and earnest musician, and his work is characterised by all the science which those who know him have learnt to expect in anything that comes from his hand. The opera was favourably received.

In the Theater Unter den Linden, the Gilbert and Sullivan opera, *The Grand Duke*, has been achieving great success both from an artistic and a financial point of view. The charming music, in particular, has become very popular. Several managers from different parts of Germany have seen the piece, and have secured it for their own houses.

The largest theatre in Berlin is now the Olympia Theatre, which seats 4,000 persons. It was erected expressly for the production of *The Orient*, which many readers will remember to have seen at Olympia in London. The entertainment was much applauded on the occasion of the first performance, the magnifi-

cent effects obtained by gorgeous scenery and beautiful dresses being fully appreciated by a large, and not too critical, audience.

IN VIENNA.

The season is at an end, and there is nothing important or new in sight. It would be wearisome to recount the number of projects which have been made for the coming season. There will be a keen competition between the various theatres, and the managements are busily seeking the best and most expensive both in pieces and performers. The Burg Theatre proposes the representation of the *Wallenstein* trilogy; the German Volks-theater announces new performances of Nestroy's *Talisman*, Anzengruber's *Ledigem Hof*, and "Emilia Galotti's" melo-dramatic plays. A new piece by Sauberman will very likely be brought out at the Raimund Theatre. At the Carl Theatre a number of players of peasant origin, known as the "Schlierseer,' have been performing for a short season. These actors are not amateurs, but real peasants, who have banded together to perform certain plays. And it is even a little embarrassing to find them described as peasant-players, because they have become such skilful artists that it is only by an effort of the memory that one realises that they are not, strictly speaking, professionals. This has even been urged against them by certain critics, who prefer the "rustic simplicity" of the Oberammergau players. The Schlierseer are too well trained, too smooth, and too smart. They have indeed seen much of the world, and have even been to America, so that much of the peasant element has been eliminated from them. Nevertheless, they have attracted good houses, and have performed a number of peasant plays with remarkable skill and no small degree of public favour.

IN ITALIAN CITIES.

The general suspension of the theatrical season in Italy on the approach of the hot weather leaves very little of importance to be recorded respecting the past month. Where the theatres have not been actually closed, the pieces played have for the most part been of a minor character. An exception may perhaps be made in the case of Signor P. Floridia's opera of *Maruzza*, which aroused considerable enthusiasm when produced at the Dal Verme, Milan. This opera, however, is by no means new to Italian audiences, having already been sung with great success in several of the leading cities of Italy. Signorina Ravasio-Prandi, Signora Bianchini-Cappelli, and Signori Angelini-Fornari and

Cosentino, to whom the chief parts were assigned at the Dal Verme, greatly contributed to the successful reception which Signor Floridia's work had. In the course of a short season at the Fossati Theatre, Milan, the Sbodio-Carnaghi Company gave the initial performance of *Augusto*, a farce from the joint pens of Signor Pozza and Signor Aresca, but hardly with flattering results. A new three-act comedy by Signor Carlo Bertolazzi, *La Maschera*, was also produced at Milan, and with better success than fell to the lot of *Augusto*.

IN MADRID.

An interesting history is attached to the latest dramatic production of Señor Echegaray, a short drama performed for the first time at the Comedia, under the title of *Amor Salvaje*. When about two years ago Signor Novelli was in Madrid, Señor Echegaray promised to write a play suitable for his production on the stage of the Comedia on the occasion of his next visit to the Spanish capital. At the end of May last Signor Novelli was once more in Madrid, and, mindful of the promise which had been made him, called upon Señor Echegaray for its fulfilment, and with friendly persistence would be turned aside by no excuses of any kind. Finding thus to escape from his lightly given undertaking was impossible, the Spanish dramatist immediately settled himself down to the task of evolving a plot and writing a play round it in as short a time as was possible, and such was his application to the work that, within eight days, *Amor Salvaje* was written and in course of translation into Italian, the language in which they desired to perform it. The play bears evident traces of hurry, but, even though performed in a foreign tongue, it scored a distinct success. *Las Escopetas*, a farce by Señores Paso and Alvarez, with incidental music by Señor Valverde, jun., and Señor Estellés, made a very good first appearance at the Apolo. The plot, which unfolds the troubles of a hunting party, who, for want of a better quarry, are reduced to the slaying of an unfortunate bull which has managed to wander beyond its owner's care, is hardly novel or striking, but the story is handled in a skilful manner and made to produce a series of highly diverting situations. At the Apolo also a lyrical farce entitled *Las Mujeres* made its first bow to the public. It is by Señor Javier de Burgos and Señor Jiménez, the authors of *El Baile de Luis Alonso*, and has a plot of a very simple character, demonstrating the power of feminine artifice to regain a mastery over the affections of a husband which have been led astray through the machinations of a bachelor acquaintance. The reception of

the new farce was highly complimentary, both to the librettist and to the composer of the music.

IN NEW YORK.

In view of the heavy losses sustained by nearly all New York managers lately, the season of English opera at the American Theatre has achieved quite an enviable degree of success. *The Bohemian Girl* drew good audiences for the first week, and in the second *The Mikado* was so well received that it was continued throughout the third week. It was succeeded by *Pinafore*, which was universally welcomed as an old-time favourite. Mr. Joseph Lynde played Count Arnheim, Poo-Bah, and Captain Corcoran, and Miss Dorothy Morton Yum-Yum and Josephine. Mr. Charles Drew was an unusually satisfactory exponent of Gilbertian humour. Mr. T. Q. Seabrooke has taken up the principal part in *Thoroughbred* in succession to Mr. Henry Dixey, but the change has failed to give the play a new lease of life. It is to be withdrawn until next season. The heterogeneous entertainment, in which every successful play is burlesqued, every actor imitated, and every society foible satirised with an unsparing hand, has just been produced at the Casino. It is called *In Gay New York*, and, like *The Passing Show* and *The Merry World*, has exactly hit the public taste. A ballet of English peers and American heiresses is legitimately funny ; so also is an irreverent travesty of the belfry scene in *The Heart of Maryland*. Sir Henry Irving's Macbeth, Miss Nethersole's Carmen, Mr. Oscar Hammerstein, Lord Dunraven, and Paderewski are all caricatured, nearly always, however, within the bounds of good taste. At the Grand Opera House Mr. W. T. Carleton has opened a short season with *The Chimes of Normandy*. His baritone voice was as fine as ever, and with his strong supporting company the result ought to be gratifying to him. Daly's Theatre is given over to Kellar, a conjuror who professes to have learnt most of his clever juggling among the fakirs in the more inaccessible parts of India.

Echoes from the Green Room.

It is understood that M. Sardou is writing for Sir Henry Irving a play in which Robespierre will be the principal figure. For the period of the French Revolution, Sir Henry has long had a marked liking. M. Claretie, after seeing him as Richelieu, once asked him whether there was any other historical personage he would particularly wish to represent. He reflected a moment, his countenance assuming a thoughtful expression. "Français ou Anglais?" he at length asked. "Français ou Anglais; peu importe," replied Claretie. "Eh, bien!" he answered, after another short pause, "je serais heureux de créer un Camille Desmoulins."

Before leaving America Sir Henry Irving presented Mr. Jefferson with one of the rarest relics of the stage—the gold-mounted walking-stick used by King as Sir Peter Teazle in the first performance of *The School for Scandal*.

When Sir Henry Irving appears as Iachimo in *Cymbeline*, it will not be the first part he has acted in that play. As far back as 1857 he supported Miss Helen Faucit at the Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, as Pisanio. An eye-witness of the performance thus records his impressions:—"Towards the end of Scene 3, Act II., Pisanio, 'a sly and constant knave; not to be shak'd; The agent for his master,' came on the stage—a tall, thin, angular, nervous-looking young man and a stranger evidently. In answer to a question of mine the man next to me said, 'That's a young man who lately joined the company. He's on his mettle, and will give a good account of himself to-night yet.' This was the future tragedian, Henry Irving. Pale and anxious he looked, and eager to do his best with his limited stock of stagecraft, in its way perfect. I well remember he went through the trying business of the scene, but made no special impression, overshadowed as he was by the greater genius. Nevertheless, tyro as he was, he held his own, and soon afterward shared in the triumphs of the evening. It does take an audience some little time to discriminate the smaller lights when a brilliant genius is ever and again on the stage, and when the thoughts of all are wrapt in the representation of a character of which he or she only is the only adequate exponent. That the soliloquy and scene previous to that now to be referred to more particularly was acceptable to the audience must be inferred, as it paved the way for what followed. In Scene 4, Act III., wherein the agony of Imogen is delineated, and where the now doubly 'constant Pisanio' has but little to speak, but much to act, the audience seemed spellbound—and so also seemed the trembling neophyte. Standing in the centre, facing the wrapt audience, with the great queen of tragedy kneeling before him racked with anguish caused by foul slander on a fair soul, she draws Pisanio's sword, and, forcing it into his hand, reiterating her husband's order, 'Do his bidding, strike!' the pent-up feeling in the honest servitor's soul finds vent in the passionate: 'Hence, vile instrument; thou shalt not damn my hand!' This was said as it should be said, and the sword flung off the stage. The effect was electrical, and a round of hearty plaudits resounded from all parts of the house on the instant. The expression is often heard of a great actor 'reading Shakspere by flashes of lightning.' This was one flash, and an early one, from an actor who has now earned his name. Even here the inspiration of author and actress must have lifted him up, for the harmony was complete."

Mr. Alexander has commissioned Mr. J. H. M'Carthy to prepare a new version of *The Duke's Motto*. He has also secured the sole dramatic rights of Mr. Merriman's novel, *The Sowers*.

Mr. Beerbohm Tree's new theatre on the site of Her Majesty's is making rapid progress, in spite of the building strike ; but it will not be ready until 1897. The Haymarket will see the last of its present occupant, whose reign there has been so popular, on July 15. Two months later Mr. Tree starts on a provincial tour, which is to last until the middle of November. He has, by the way, some intention of producing a dramatic version of Mr. Gilbert Parker's recently published novel, *The Seats of the Mighty*.

Mr. Alfred Calmour's blank verse play dealing with an incident in the early life of Rubens has been bought by Miss Ellen Terry, whose appearances in his *Amber Heart* are still fresh in playgoers' memories. We may hope, then, to see her before very long in the character of Mary Rubens.

Miss Ellen Terry has purchased a new-one-act play, *Agatha Dene*, by Mrs. Russ Whytal, which was successfully produced in New York last season.

Mr. Toole, who has been on tour in the South of England, is not, we regret to say, in good health, though one would not guess it from his performances. He is about to take a much-needed holiday.

Mr. Alexander, after a tour with *The Prisoner of Zenda*, is expected to produce a new five-act comedy by Mr. Carton, *The Tree of Knowledge*, with Mr. and Mrs. Fred Terry and Mr. H. B. Irving in the cast.

In certain quarters, which it is needless to specify, there have been indications recently that the pleasant relations existing between managers and members of the Press have become a little strained. In several instances exception would appear to have been taken to the severe tone adopted by critics in reference to productions of a class that undoubtedly deserved unqualified censure. By an odd coincidence, the usual invitation has in later cases failed to reach the office of the offending newspaper. The circumstance may, of course, have been due to an accidental oversight—we can hardly believe that any manager would pursue so foolish and foolhardy a policy as the intentional omission would suggest. Still the fact remains as we have pointed out. On the general merits of the question there can be no uncertainty. No newspaper of any standing would object to pay for its seat on a first night, were the custom universal. But, excellent in theory, it has been found unworkable in practice. And thi from the management standpoint chiefly. But it must be distinctly understood that in accepting a ticket for a performance the dramatic critic places himself under no obligation—that he retains absolute freedom to pronounce a fair and unbiased opinion. Any manager disposed to assert the contrary, may not be credited with Marlowe's words, "Now will I show myself to have more of the serpent than the dove ; that is, more knave than fool."

Although distinguished by the production of no novelty, the performance given at the Gaiety on the afternoon of June 9th, for the benefit of Miss Kate Vaughan, is an event of too great importance to be passed over unnoticed. Everyone is aware that the state of Miss Vaughan's health has lately been such as to give her friends serious grounds for alarm. Fortunately, the best hopes were held out by her physician that complete recovery might be ensured by means of a long sea voyage

and residence for some little time in a warmer climate. With the view of obtaining the requisite funds, a complimentary benefit was at once organised, with the Prince of Wales as patron, and a committee of which the strength and brilliancy fully attested the profound interest felt by all sections of the public in Miss Vaughan's welfare. Of the programme submitted, we can only give the barest details. Mr. H. V. Esmond and Miss Eva Moore appeared in the former's clever little comedy, *In and Out of a Punt*. *More than Ever* was played by an exceptionally brilliant cast. Mr. Tree and the Haymarket company gave a couple of scenes from *King Henry IV.*, and a superb representation of *Trial by Jury* brought the proceedings to a close. To specify those who contributed in one form or another to the success of the afternoon would be to mention the names of most of the leading actors, actresses, and vocalists at present engaged in London. At the close of the performance, Mr. Charles Fulton, to whose untiring efforts the gratifying result was greatly due, announced that the large sum of £1,000 had been obtained.

Romeo and Juliet will be the attraction at Drury Lane in July, with Miss Esmé Beringer and Miss Kate Rorke in the principal parts.

The Geisha being so successful at Daly's Theatre, the owner of the house has had to look around for a temporary home wherein to house his company of comedians. They will succeed Madame Bernhardt at the Comedy, opening on July 6. Miss Rehan, Mrs Elbert, and Mr. Lewis will again delight us with their admirable acting, while two actors new to London in leading parts will also be of the company. These are Mr. Edwin Stevens and Mr. Charles Richman, of whom the latter has succeeded to Mr. John Drew's line of characters, and is said to play them very well. *The Countess Gucki*, which has been so successful in America, and *Love on Crutches*, another adaptation from the German, will, it seems, form the staple of the performances to be given. Of the telescoped version of th two parts of *Henry IV.* nothing is now to be heard.

One of the Best has failed to survive the hot weather, and the Adelphi is likely to remain closed until August, when a new melodrama by Mr. Haddon Chambers and Mr. Comyns Carr will be produced.

Mr. James Payn, whose illness has been so widely regretted, and whose retirement from the editorship of the *Cornhill* is a loss to periodical literature, is collaborating in the construction of a play, based presumably upon one of his entertaining novels. Many years ago, a one-act piece called *A Substitute* was written by Mr. Payn and produced in London at the Court Theatre; but this is, so far as we know, his only previous excursion into the region of the drama.

If Mr. John Hare does revive *The Hobby Horse* when he returns to England, the play is pretty sure to meet with more favourable treatment than it did ten years ago. It was thought then that the mixture of serious and comic elements in the piece militated against its success, and so, no doubt, it did. But playgoers are in some ways more intelligent now than they were ten years ago—at least one hopes so—and a thoroughly interesting play like *The Hobby Horse* ought to have every chance of success, especially since Mr. Hare's part—Spencer Jermyn—is quite one of his best. All the parts are good, and the play is an admirable specimen of Mr. Pinero's middle manner, lying as it does midway between his farces and his most recent dramas of more serious—some people think too serious—interest.

The effects upon the theatres of the glorious weather of the past month

are interesting to note. Not only have several houses closed, but those that remain open have in various respects modified their usual arrangements. Thus, for instance, morning performances on Saturdays are going out of favour, while there are more given on Wednesdays than ever. The reason for this is obvious. The mid-week *matinée* catches ladies up in town for the day, and is generally far more likely to be well attended than a performance on Saturday afternoons, when there is so much else going on in the open air, and when the river, the cricket field, the tennis lawn, and the golf links, not to mention the bicycle, make irresistible appeals.

It would not be bad policy if more managers were to follow the example set at the Princess's Theatre and adopt a reduced scale of summer prices. It has certainly succeeded well at the Oxford-street playhouse, where *The Span of Life* has been doing excellent business, thanks in some degree, no doubt, to the fearful and wonderful poster which meets the affrighted eye on every hoarding.

The Queen's Proctor bids fair to become a success, and seems likely to run now until the end of the season. Then comes a provincial tour for the Royalty company, and after that America, where Mr. Bourchier will in November produce *The Chili Widow* at the Garden Theatre, New York. Mr. and Mrs. Bourchier, Miss Irene Vanbrugh, and Mr. Blakeley will appear in their original parts, and the amusing piece ought to have a fresh lease of life. *The Liar*, *Kitty Clive*, and *Monsieur de Paris* will also be submitted to the judgment of American playgoers. Mr. Arthur Bourchier, by the way, has just put on as a curtain-raiser that rather antiquated farce, *Dearest Mamma*, with Mr. Blakeley in his old part of Browser.

The Haymarket Theatre passes on Mr. Tree's departure into the hands of Mr. Cyril Maude and Mr. Frederick Harrison, the latter at present of the Lyceum Theatre.

Miss Ulmar (Mrs. Ivan Caryll) is returning to the stage, where her charming voice and capital acting made her such a favourite some years ago. She will go on a tour with *The Geisha* before making her reappearance in London.

Mr. Louis Parker and Mr. Murray Carson, the authors of the very successful *Rosemary*, are to write another play for Mr. Wyndham, going back this time to the days of Sheridan. Mr. Parker has also, it is stated, been asked by Mr. Wilson Barrett to assist in the construction of a new "religious drama," to be called *Daughters of Babylon*. In view of the long run of *The Sign of the Cross*, it is not surprising to learn that a play on the subject of *The Pilgrim's Progress* has been produced, for copyright purposes, at a London theatre. We believe, however, that there is no truth in the statements that the dramatic versions are being prepared of Butler's *Analogy* and of *The Whole Duty of Man*.

The place of the late Mr. Henry Howe in the Lyceum company will be taken by Mr. Frederick Robinson, a popular leading juvenile in London thirty years ago, when he played at the St. James's under Miss Herbert's management, but better known to American than to English playgoers. Sir Henry Irving always has a place in his heart for old comrades.

In view of the unveiling of the marble statue of Mrs. Siddons on Paddington-green, an article in the *Era* of June 20, on her various homes, has special interest. It is by Mr. David Oliver, a well-known London journalist, who had previously contributed to the same paper an excellent memoir of her—so excellent indeed that it was reprinted by the Memorial committee, of which Sir Henry Irving is chairman.

Mr. Quaritch, of Piccadilly, is offering for sale an interesting letter by Shirley Brooks, dated April 21st, 1873. "On Saturday night," writes that clever editor of *Punch* to his son, "we all went to the Lyceum to see the new play, *Eugene Aram*, about whom, if you have Smollett's *History of England* at hand, you will find all details. He was a murderer, who was duly hanged in 1759; but on the stage he is made a sentimental rascal, who dies of a sort of broken heart. The play is beautifully got up, and Irving acts very finely; but I do not like it."

Croydon has not yet been incorporated with London, and consequently the production at Mr. Tom Craven's handsome new theatre situated there of a new play hardly comes within the scope of our metropolitan notices. A word, nevertheless, may be spared to *The Wanderer from Venus*, first performed at the Grand, Croydon, on June 8, inasmuch as the piece bears the sign-manual of two writers so well known as Mr. Robert Buchanan and "Charles Marlowe." Not that, we fear, their new "fanciful comedy" is likely to add greatly to the fame of either, particularly as the ground it covers is already occupied, and occupied, we are constrained to say, to much better purpose. Had *Pygmalion and Galatea* never been written, one might be disposed to recognise in *The Wanderer from Venus* a certain measure of novelty. Unfortunately, as matters stand, we can only see in it a comparatively ineffective version of Mr. Gilbert's brilliant work. And from this view even the efforts of a company including among its numbers Miss Kate Rorke, Miss Eva Moore, Miss Harriett Jay, Mr. G. W. Anson, and Mr. John Beauchamp have failed to convert us.

The death is announced of a well-known musical critic, Mr. Henry Hersee. He wrote much for *The Theatre* in its early days, acted as honorary secretary of the Philharmonic Society, and prepared the English adaptation of *Carmen*, *Aida*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *The Piper of Hamelin*, *La Giaconda*, and other operas. He was the father of Madame Rose Hersee, long a popular vocalist, and had an extensive and peculiar knowledge of music.

It is possible that Mr. Arthur Bourchier may cancel his autumn tour to run *The Queen's Proctor* until he starts in November for America.

Madame Nordica was married last month to Herr Zoltan Doeme, a baritone, well known in his native Hungary.

Mr. H. T. Van Laun has purchased Mr. Walter Goodman's portrait of Mrs. Keeley, exhibited eight years ago at the Royal Academy, and has presented it to the Savage Club as a tribute to the memory of his father, M. Henri Van Laun, who was for twenty-one years a valued member of the Club.

Mr. Fred Horner, the author of *The Sunbury Scandal*, explains why it was that the first two acts of his comedy fell so flat. In a letter to the Press he says: "To my utter astonishment, at an early portion of the play at the *première* in London, some of the players hesitated, and, when the thread was taken up, it was so far ahead that it is little wonder the audience was confused, for a very important explanation had thus been omitted."

Major Raymond, a new four-act play by Mr. Philip Havard, is to be the next production at Terry's. Mr. W. L. Abingdon has been secured for an important part—not a "villain," perhaps, this time.

Mr. T. Edgar Pemberton is the author of a three-act melodrama called *Loyal to the Last* which was produced at the Theatre Royal, Birmingham, on June 16, by Mr. Charles Dornton. Mr. Pemberton freely acknowledges that the drama is not entirely original. It is, in fact, an up-to-date edition of a play very popular in Birmingham some fifty years ago. The new

dialogue that tells the old story must be infinitely better than the grandiloquent periods so common in those days in this class of work.

Under the title of *Pen, Pencil, Baton, and Mask* (Spottiswoode & Co.), Mrs. Helen C. Black has brought together into one volume a number of biographical sketches of famous people, contributed by her from time to time to various periodicals. The book is not only instructive but entertaining, as Mrs. Black has contrived to introduce many amusing details regarding the men and women of whom she writes. As might be expected, special prominence is given to members of the theatrical profession. We may add that the writer has managed to accomplish her somewhat difficult task with no small amount of tact and taste.

Mr. Bronson Howard, who is at present in England, has particular views. "Actors of the veteran class," he says, "are prone to abuse any system of training for the profession. But the dramatic schools in America are doing good work. They are teaching novices whether their careers lie properly on the stage or not. It is better that these experiments should be conducted in these schools than in the theatres. It saves audiences many needless inflictions."

Le Député de Bombignac, so well known on the English stage as *The Candidate*, is in rehearsal at the Comédie Française, M. Coquelin, the younger, being the Pinteau. *Ninon et Maintenon*, a four-act comedy in verse, by M. Lucien de Lassus, has been refused at the Comédie Française.

Montjoye is to be revived at the Maison de Molière next autumn, M. Leloir, at the express request of the author, M. Octave Feuillet, being cast for the chief part.

Fame has its drawbacks, as all famous men and women have found to their cost. A Viennese tradesman, by name Richard Wagner, lately thought fit to adopt a portrait of the composer of *Lohengrin* as a trade mark. Frau Wagner and her son strove to obtain an injunction against such a desecration, but without success. A court of law solemnly decided that it could not prohibit the use of any portrait as a trade mark.

We much regret to announce the death of Miss Kate Field, the eminent American journalist. About twenty years ago she was well known in London society, and two comedietta from her pen, *Extremes Meet* and *Eyes Right*, in which she took part both as an actress and a vocalist, were produced here. It is worthy of note that she was the writer of the first elaborate description in *The Times* of the telephone, and was a frequent contributor to *The Theatre* in its early days. To her we are also indebted for short biographies of Fechter and Ristori. Miss Field was a lineal descendant of Nathaniel Field, who joined Massinger in writing *The Fatal Dowry*. From a letter to Pope it seems that this dramatist was the Field whose name appears with Heminge and Condell in the first folio edition of Shakspere's plays, and also in the list of *dramatis personæ* in *Cynthia's Revels*.

Miss Field was a worshipper of Dickens. "It was worth while," she once said, speaking of him as a lover of children, "to receive a compliment from him; it was turned with such art. I know of one note in America so felicitous in expression as to deserve publicity. It was addressed to a New York girl. Going up the steps of Steinway Hall, on the occasion of Dickens' reading on New Year's Eve, she was met by a friend, who said, 'I've a message for you from the Chief. I asked him if he saw you in the audience. '*See* her!' replied Dickens, 'Yes, God bless her! She's the best

audience I ever had.' 'And I've a message for Mr. Dickens,' returned the delighted girl. Whereupon she drew forth a basket of violets that graced Dickens' desk during the evening and elicited the following response:—'I entreat you to accept my most cordial thanks for your charming New Year's present. If you could know what pleasure it yielded me, you would be repaid, even for your delicate and sympathetic kindness. But I must avow that nothing in the pretty basket of flowers was quite so interesting to me as a certain bright, fresh face I have seen at my readings, which I am told you may see too—when you look in the glass!'" The "New York girl" was Miss Kate Field herself.

THE announcement of the bankruptcy of Messrs. Abbey, Schoeffel, and Grau came as a great surprise to the public both in England and America. It is an eloquent comment upon the present condition of theatrical affairs across the Atlantic. This season's record is almost entirely made up of disasters.

MR. FRANK MAYO, so well known on the American stage, died suddenly on June 8th. His Davy Crockett was really a remarkable achievement.

MR. J. E. DODSON has received an offer to star next season, but will remain at the Empire Theatre, New York, next year, under Mr. Charles Frohman's management. He will not be in London this summer.

AN extraordinary performance of *Hamlet* has lately taken place in America. The actors were the students of a Jesuit College, and the play was declaimed entirely in Latin. On the programme were the words "A modification has been made in the impersonation of the Queen and Ophelia." The modification consisted in altering "Ophelia" to "Ophelius, cousin to Hamlet," the part being played by a youth with a thick moustache. The Jesuits do not sanction female impersonation

MR. STEPHEN FISKE, in the New York *Spirit of the Times*, has been making a suggestion that all managers playing Shakspere should pay royalties on his works to a fund that could be devoted to some theatrical charity. Those who did not do so would, with their companies, be debarred from participating in the benefits of the charity. But this would be hard upon the companies, while the managers in all probability would not much mind. The suggestion does not at first sight seem to be of much value. It might be carried out with advantage if everybody would agree to it, but, as that is not in the least likely, it has not much chance of being put into effect.

MR. MAX O'RELL has written another play besides that to which we referred a few months ago. It is to be brought out in America by Miss Rose Coghlan, and it is said to be "intended for production by Mr. Forbes Robertson and Mrs. Patrick Campbell in London next November." Such an ingenuous statement disarms criticism. Of the many authors who "intend" their pieces to be produced by leading managers, how many, we wonder, ever found their "intentions" realized.

THE *Illustrated American* recently printed an article by Mr. Austin Brereton upon "The Decadence of Dramatic Criticism," in which, after denouncing the critics who serve as press-agents, the critics who receive commissions upon theatrical advertisements, and the critic-dramatists, he says: *The Spirit of the Times* is fortunate in possessing the services of a critic whose long experience, both as manager and writer, has proved of immense benefit in his brilliant and lucid exposition of the work of the playwright and the actor. His criticisms are far-reaching, for they are

read by managers and journalists as distant not only as London but Australia." This is not likely to be denied by any competent observer

By the death of Ernesto Rossi Italy has lost a distinguished citizen, and the world one of the most brilliant masters and exponents of the dramatic art. He left Odessa on May 4 on board the vessel Pandora, from which he disembarked at Constantinople, in order to give two performances before the Sultan and his harem, the ladies of which saw the play from behind a lattice-work screen. The actor appeared to be in excellent health, and on the subsequent journey from Constantinople to Brindisi he was a source of much entertainment to his companions on board ship, his vivacious and amusing disposition being much appreciated by everyone. While in the train on the way from Foggia to Florence he was seized with severe cramp in the region of the heart, and more than once exclaimed "I am dying!" At Pescaro, the first large station, Signor Rossi, whose condition grew steadily worse, was carried by four men into the waiting-room. He suffered severely from difficulty of breathing, and exclaimed "Air! Air!" When he obtained a few minutes' relief he spoke cheerfully with those about him of his approaching end, and said: "Would that I had died in Odessa! I have always wished to die on the stage." He was referring to a heart attack which seized him when playing King Lear in that city. The physicians in Pescara recognised that the patient's condition was one of great gravity, and caused him to be conveyed to an hotel. Here he remained for four days, hovering between life and death. His mind was for the most part in a wandering condition, and he recited almost continually passages from *Louis XI.*

Rossi was a great artist, in no part greater than in that of Othello. In this he gave play to a passionate temperament to which our cold Northern nature is a stranger. It was the Moor, and nothing but the Moor, that one saw upon the stage. He differed from English actors in his abundant use of gesture, that dumb but eloquent language which Signora Duse, his great fellow country-woman, also employs with such superb effect. By this means he was able to convey the most subtle shades of emotion, shades which few English actors would be able to intimate to the audience. He was in the best sense of the word a *virtuoso*, but he had also the defects to which *virtuosi* are specially liable. He saw no objection to going on tour with a company which would have been hissed off the stage in Italy. So long as he could shine he was content that his company should consist of "a star and some sticks," as an American would say. Yet he was a most conscientious and earnest student of all his parts, as well as an actor of rare insight. When he played Hamlet one forgot that it was a performance on the stage; it was the Prince of Denmark and no actor that one saw. As Lear, as Richard III., as Macbeth, he showed the versatility of a talent which nearly approached to genius. If we do not speak of him as a genius, it is not because we underrate his very exceptional gifts, but because that is a word which we feel should be reserved for the very greatest. If Signor Rossi was not one of the greatest actors of all time, he was certainly one of the best and finest of his own time, and it will be very hard to fill his place.

The Title Page and Index for the volume of *The Theatre*, January to June, 1896, is now ready, and may be had of the publishers, price 2d.

THE THEATRE.

AUGUST, 1896.

Our Watch Tower.

ACTRESS AND "ACTRESS."

IN the course of an excellent article on the abuse of the term "actress," the Manchester *Umpire* suggests that this practice ought to expose police-court reporters and sub-editors to punishment for libel. Certainly the familiar headline in the newspapers "An Actress in Trouble," is frequently a gross outrage on members of an honourable profession. It is designed to pique the curiosity of the reader, who finds that the so-called "actress" has no theatre except the thoroughfare, and no stage but the pavement. The excuse for the misrepresentation is that the woman is alleged to have occupied, some time or other, a nondescript position in the dumbshow of burlesque. That this does not and never did entitle her to be called an actress is a reflection which seldom troubles the reporter. He has only one word in his vocabulary to describe a Rachel and a woman arrested in Piccadilly for disorderly conduct. To the sub-editor the expediency of selling the paper is more urgent than the honesty of drawing decent distinctions. Of course, the *Umpire* is well aware that newspapers cannot be prosecuted for offences of this kind. You cannot libel a corporation. In the eye of the law, actresses are not materially injured because they are classed with outcasts who come before a magistrate. All that can be done is to point out to the editors of newspapers, who may be presumed to have an intelligent appreciation of social and artistic conditions, that the constant misuse of the word "actress" in police reports is a scandal which ought to be avoided by the exercise of elementary good sense and right feeling.

The same abuse occurs in cases, unfortunately too common, in which brainless sprigs of the nobility are infatuated with the

charms of ladies who exhibit the perfections of nature unimpeded by dramatic art. When they bring their blighted heartstrings into court, they, too, are called actresses. They may have shone in the footlights as "corner" girls of the chorus, without voices, without the smallest pretence to any capacity whatever, except that of hooking some foolish young aristocrat in the stalls who never spends an hour in the admiration of legitimate talent. The *Umpire* proposes that the Peers should pass a Bill for the protection of their sons from the peculiar magnetism of certain stage-doors. The Legislature often invades the liberty of the subject with less reason. Perhaps Belgravia will agitate for repressive measures, or at least form an Anti-Stagedoor For The Heirs of Earldoms Association. All that concerns us now is the assumption that the sirens who demand redress for broken pledges must be designated by a word which has quite a different atmosphere. An actress claims respect for a calling which needs intelligence and industry—qualifications conspicuously absent from the exhibition which charms the fatuous youth who lays a pedigree at the feet of beauty. It will not do to say that the line cannot be drawn, and that "actress" is a generic term comprehending all women who make their appearance on the stage. To be a speechless ornament in tights is not to be an actress, any more than to retail grammarless scraps of gossip is to be a journalist. Let us take an inoffensive illustration. A girl who poses in a "living picture" may be agreeable to look at, and quite in harmony with the subject; but to describe her as an actress is to confuse mechanism with art, the model with the artist. Her work is not even pantomime, for that implies a gift of expression. She is on the stage, but not of it; yet should she come within the range of the police reporter's observation he will at once promote her to the profession of Ellen Terry and Ada Rehan.

It might be a charity to enrich the sub-editor's dictionary with the useful word "super." Everybody knows what "supers" are. They possess a verb, as the sub-editor may be interested to learn; for "supering" is a familiar occupation to a considerable class, male and female. The Actors' Association might appoint a stage manager to give a lecture, for the benefit of sub-editors, on the difference between "supering" and acting. If this exposition were repeated at intervals in the course of a season, we believe the newspapers would begin to have a smattering of the subject. "Serious Charge Against a Super" might, in course of time, supersede "An Actress and the Police." Probably the respectable "supers" would soon have cause to be offended; but this would be incidental to the progress of the sub-editor's education. As he may plead that the drama is not

his department, it might be advisable for the dramatic critics to supervise the police-court cases until the proper technicalities become firmly established in the traditions of the newspaper offices. Then it will be definitely understood that actors and actresses are people who act, and that the art of acting is quite foreign to the temperament, capacity, and ambition of most of the ladies who appear before the judicial tribunals with antecedents suggestive of theatrical entertainments. The Manchester critic holds that no woman deserves to be called an actress unless she has spoken "at least twelve lines clearly and distinctly on some public stage." The test is not severe; to us it seems inadequate. There are many fairies who speak considerably more than a dozen lines in pantomime "openings" without qualifying in the least for the title of actress. A fairy is not a "part"; it is a wand and a pair of artificial wings. To act is to impersonate, and the diploma of the profession should be formally granted only to those who have actually impersonated character. Between acting and "supering" there is a middle state, that of apprenticeship; but although we should like to see ambitious novices content to call themselves apprentices, we forbear to press this distinction on the sub-editor and reporter, lest their minds should be over-burdened with the perplexities of unwonted learning.

If there were a school of acting in this country, the professional diploma might be granted by indisputable authority; but those artists who have earned it by genuine work have reason to protest against an arbitrary and ignorant custom which uses it as a condiment of notoriety for seasoning the police news. There is an opportunity for reform here, to which the newspapers might give their attention in the dull season, when many columns are gaping for a novel idea. A more precise definition of an actress than now prevails would, at all events, be more intelligent employment than that of reporting the fugitive antics of the sea-serpent. In *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray*, it may be remembered, there is a sarcastic reference to the abuse we are speaking of. "Miss Hervey—Lady Orreyed as she now is—was," says Cayley Drummle, "a lady who would have been, perhaps has been, described in the reports of the police or the divorce court as an actress. Had she belonged to a lower stratum of our advanced civilisation, she would, in the event of judicial inquiry, have defined her calling with equal justification as that of a dressmaker."

Portraits.

MRS. BEERBOHM TREE.

THOSE who saw Miss Maud Holt take part, a good many years ago now, in a Greek play acted by the girls at Queen's College, Harley-street, had little idea probably that the stage would ultimately claim her for its own. At that time the classics took up all her attention, and it was not until she married in 1884 that she determined to adopt her husband's profession, and to devote to public uses the talents she had shown as an amateur actress. Her first appearance was made in a piece, now almost forgotten, called *The Millionaire*, while she gained equal success at the St. James's as Lady Betty Noel in *Lady Clancarty*, and as Constance Moxon in *The Hobby-Horse*. Since Mr. Tree took the Haymarket, in 1887, Mrs. Tree has, almost without a break, associated herself with the fortunes of that theatre—a wise policy, which she will, no doubt, continue when the new Her Majesty's Theatre opens its doors. To many of Mr. Tree's greatest successes she has contributed in great measure, and following, perhaps, her husband's example, she has proved herself of late years an artist of considerable versatility. Seeing her in such parts as Stella Darbisher in *Captain Swift*, Dorothy Musgrave in *Beau Austin*, or the wife in *A Man's Shadow*, the critic would be inclined to attribute her success to the possession of that quality which so greatly distinguishes the acting of Miss Marion Terry, and for which it is hard to find any word more expressive than "womanliness." But see her again as the adventuress in *A Bunch of Violets*, as a lady of fashion in *A Woman of No Importance*, as the foolish heroine of *A Woman's Reason*, and you cannot but recognise that an actress who plays with acceptance such widely different characters, and lends to each a certain charm and distinctive attraction of its own, must be gifted with decided aptitude for character-acting, as well as with an easy style and a graceful and sympathetic stage presence. For La Pompadour Mrs. Tree was hardly strong enough when she attempted the part, but her touching and beautiful rendering of Ophelia came as a surprise even to those who had rated her powers most highly; and when she followed Mrs. Patrick Campbell as Fédora the play certainly lost nothing by the change, and she, at any rate, had no reason to regret the comparison that was inevitable in the circumstances. We congratulate Mrs. Tree and her husband on the chapter in their life which has just closed, and heartily wish them success in their new artistic home.

Photographed by Alfred Ellis, 20, Upper Baker St., N.W.

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MRS. BEERBOHM TREE.

The Round Table.

A SUPPRESSED BURLESQUE—*THE HAPPY LAND.*

By Edward Righton.

I PROPOSE to narrate, from personal recollection, a curious and sometimes misunderstood incident in the history of the stage more than twenty-three years ago. I had the honour of stage managing the original production of *The Happy Land* at the Court Theatre, if, indeed, he can be called stage manager who is entirely guided by the wishes of the author. The vicissitudes of this wonderful political satire were many, some of them amusing enough, while others gave all concerned a great deal of anxiety.

When *The Happy Land* was read to the artists, few, if any, of us, I am afraid, saw its real point. We tittered a little now and then, but never burst into the hearty and incessant laughter with which the public afterwards received it. Nobody is more ready for a genuine guffaw than an actor when he sees the gist of a joke, and I think the harshest thing that could be said of our want of penetration on that occasion was that we were none of us posted up in the politics of the day.

The question of how to dress the three male characters was one which exercised me greatly, and Mr. Latour Tomline, the *nom de plume* chosen by Mr. Gilbert, the author of both *The Wicked World* and its burlesque, *The Happy Land*, seemed to have formed no idea on the subject. At length I had an inspiration, and suggested that they — a Prime Minister, a Chancellor of the Exchequer, and a First Commissioner of Works—should be got up to represent bundles of red tape. The notion appeared to please Miss Litton (our manager) and Mr. Tomline, so I went home from rehearsal highly delighted with myself. Passing down Piccadilly, I saw, in a bookseller's window, some cartoons from *Vanity Fair*, among which were those of Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Lowe, and Mr. Ayrton. It flashed across me like lightning that a "counterfeit presentment" of the trio would be the very thing for *our* Cabinet Ministers. I com-

municated my new idea to Mr. Tomline, who caught at it instantly. Orders were given that the costumes—in velvets and satins—should be copied from the *Vanity Fair* cartoons, which was accordingly done. My joy at having so gratified an author—not always too easy to please—was considerably discounted by a suspicion, almost amounting to certainty, that from the first it had been his intention to dress his characters in the guise I thought I had sprung upon him. There was one speech in the MS. which appeared to the actors so scathingly satirical that we were afraid the audience would resent it; one of us remarking that he "didn't mind being pelted with brickbats, but objected to paving stones." We may have understood the passage as little as at first we had the whole play; but it was eliminated from the text.

The night of production came. Soon after the rising of the curtain there were some allusions to the putting up of Royal guests at hotels while Royal palaces remained empty. These were received well enough, and here, I think, the audience first began to see that they were attending the performance of a great political satire. But it was not until a speech closely following one in *The Wicked World*, and spoken by Miss Helen Barry, as the Fairy Queen, that enthusiasm was fairly aroused. In this situation the Fairy Queen, after descanting on the wonderful adminstration of earthly Cabinet Ministers, says—

> "But of all marvels the most marvellous
> Their First Commissioner of Public Works."

She could say no more, for, with a keen sense of the unpopularity and much-talked-of bad taste of Mr. Ayrton, the hearers interrupted her with a perfect cyclone of laughter. After this, we were, as betting men say, "on velvet;" and when the heads of Mr. W. H. Fisher as Mr. Gladstone, Mr. W. J. Hill as Mr. Lowe, and Mr. Edward Righton as Mr. Ayrton, appeared, rising through the clouds, there burst upon us another gale of boisterous merriment, which increased and increased in volume as we rose higher and higher, until the three figures from *Vanity Fair* stood on the stage; then the applause resembled the roaring of cannon or claps of thunder, and this was renewed when we did a little break-down step at the end of each verse of our trio—

> "We are three most popular men,
> I'd like to know who'll turn us out."

That night the production was the talk of the clubs. Next morning the box-office was besieged, and we knew we had won a great success. Judge, then, of our consternation when we received an official document from the Lord Chamberlain, prohibiting the

performance of the play. The company was dismissed until the next day, Miss Litton hoping to make some arrangement for continuing to present the entertainment. At her suggestion I went to St. James's Palace, and asked Mr. Donne, the reader of plays, to let me see the "quarto pages" of alterations—I forget how many—which he declared we had made since he passed the MS. As soon as the changes were pointed out to me I realized the weakness of his case. To make up the "quarto pages" of differences he had quoted such trivial ones as the following—

"Accept that." (In the licensed copy).
"Accept this." (In the acting copy).

This alteration was deemed an improvement at rehearsal. In a competitive examination scene, Miss Lottie Venne, as a candidate for Ministerial honours, was questioned about ships and shipping, to which she replied, "Please, Sir, what *is* a ship?" The original intention was to point to a portfolio and say "Accept that!" but we thought it would tell so much better if, in answer to her query, we rose, bowed low, and presented her with the portfolio, on which was written "First Lord of the Admiralty," exclaiming, very obsequiously, "Accept this." But the most considerable alteration in these "quarto pages" was the retention, in the licensed copy, of the speech which we, the actors, feared might bring upon us a shower of brickbats and paving-stones. On coming to this passage, I said: "Did you license *this?*" I was told that everything which was not crossed out had been licensed. With the courage of a bravo I said: "Mr. Donne, you passed this play without reading it!" "What do you mean, Sir?" he asked. "I have said what I mean," I replied, "and have no more to say." I left the palace, and at four o'clock that same afternoon we received permission at the theatre to resume the performance on condition that we discontinued making up in resemblance of the Cabinet Ministers.

Messengers were at once sent off to the members of the company, all of whom, with one exception, came to the theatre and dressed in capital time to begin the play. Unfortunately, the exception was an exceptionally important one—Mr. W. J. Hill. It appeared that he had gone to some theatre. Cabs were sent to places of amusement all over London, but without success. As the time for commencing came and went we knew that our case was hopeless, and no performance took place that night. Hill came in next day, and "could not understand why we had not sent to the Grecian Theatre." It was the one place we had overlooked, and it was there that he had passed his evening. *The Happy Land* was played again, after a suspension of only one night.

The news of our not being permitted to make up had spread, and there was much speculation as to what we could do. This is what we did: we retained the *Vanity Fair* costumes, pulled our hats well over our foreheads, and buried our chins deep in our high collars to suggest that the ministers were ashamed to show their faces. The audience was convulsed. But it so happened, in spite of all, that our visages were occasionally exposed; and we looked so young—mind, I am speaking of twenty-three years or more since—that I proposed adding a little age to our features. This we did; and the faces, by a strange coincidence, almost reproduced the original makes up.

Fisher was so able an artist that he could make himself look like anything. Hill had the advantage of often seeing Mr. Lowe in the House of Commons, so that his task was easy. Having only the cartoon to guide me, I adopted a method of speaking which kept my mouth in the position indicated by the picture. Some months afterwards, I was dozing in a railway carriage, when, at South Kensington station, a stout man got in, and immediately made the remark, "Ach! what a smell of stale smoke!" I turned to see who was imitating my Ayrton, and there stood Mr. Ayrton himself—a fact of which I was assured by a railway porter at Sloane Square station, who said, "There you are, Sir; that's you in *The Happy Land;* that's Ayrton!"

The clever work—I always think of it as Mr. Gilbert's best—continued its prosperous career in London and all through the provinces, everywhere meeting with such success that in most places the first and second entrances on both sides of the stage were given up to the public, who paid large prices for the accommodation. How the eyes of the young men, and in many cases those of older growth, sparkled as they discussed their extra good fortune in being on the stage side by side, as they thought they would be, with the beautiful young ladies who represented our fairies! Their faces fell when, just before the play commenced or any of the charming creatures came into the third entrance, the first and second entrances were shut off from it. I have only to add that *The Happy Land* did much to turn out the Gladstonian government.

PLAYWRITING: PAST AND PRESENT.

By Leopold Wagner.

IT is easier to make a fortune than to earn a livelihood by writing plays. Strange as this statement may appear, its truth can be practically demonstrated. The conditions of writing

for the stage have undergone a complete change within the last decade. Since the abolition of the stock companies, and the development of the touring system, dramatic authors not of the highest reputation have virtually found their occupation gone. They have either been improved out of existence altogether, or they have been compelled, by sheer force of circumstances, to apply themselves to the concoction of music-hall "sketches." For them the provinces and the minor London theatres exist no longer. There are, in fact, no minor theatres. While the tone of the suburban theatres has been vastly improved, new productions at these houses are like angels' visits, few and far between. All which tends to prove that the field of the dramatist has become greatly circumscribed within the last few years. Instead of producing his play at some outlying London theatre, or in the provinces, and then letting it out to managers in town and country through the Dramatic Authors' Society, he must now produce it in the West-end, where, if he scores a success, he may make a fortune at one stroke. But as, in order to await his favourable opportunity in the West-end, he must be already endowed with a sufficiency of this world's goods to place him above want, it can scarcely be said that such a one writes plays *for a livelihood*. In other words, he is not a dramatist by profession.

I shall be told that a play produced at a suburban or provincial theatre in bygone days was far from profitable; that managers, especially actor-managers, are always on the look-out for good plays; and that, as the emoluments of playwriting have increased enormously, the difficulties of getting a new play produced have naturally increased in proportion.

To the first of these statements I will answer that, if the monetary value of a suburban or provincial production was inconsiderable, the constant demand for new plays kept a number of playwrights actively employed all the year round, and the producers of the best work gained a reputation which in the end led them to fame and fortune. But for their long connection with the Grecian Theatre, Merritt and Pettitt might never have been heard of in the West-end. It was at that unhistoric temple of the drama that they learned their business; for the plays there produced have ever since served as the accepted models for our latter-day realistic drama. Out of the Grecian dramas grew *New Babylon*, *Mankind*, *The World*, *Youth*, *Pluck*, and many other "triumphs of stage management," which have completely swept the simple domestic drama off the boards. For a time suburban managers struggled on with new productions; but unable to spend large sums of money upon an elaborate *mise-en-scène*, they

at length recognised the policy of treating for the reproduction of the latest West-end successes, with all the original effects—a state of things which still obtains. New productions at the outlying theatres are now so rare as to become noteworthy. If an author is not well known, his drama must lie unprofitably on his hands. He cannot get it produced in London, and touring managers will only treat for an established London success.

There is no doubt that the multiplication of West-end theatres devoted to the lighter forms of dramatic entertainment has minimised the demand for strong drama all over the country. Hence authors, who, under the old *régime*, would have turned out drama after drama, now give their attention to farcical comedy, &c. Nevertheless, difficulties beset them at every step. To write a melodrama on approved lines is easy, compared with an actor's show-piece. And the tendency nowadays is decidedly in the direction of actors' show-pieces. Most of our smaller theatres are now in the hands of actor-managers who have had the *pièce de résistance* specially written for and around them. Or they have acquired the rights in a play that was adjudged a success at a trial matinée. Like these actor-managers, every comedian of note is anxious to secure a good show-piece for himself; but he will never give an author a direct commission to write one; neither will he engage to produce it when it is written: the author must do the work entirely at his own risk. If, after weeks or months of labour, the author, on submitting his play, hits the actor's fancy, the latter must needs find a "backer" or form a syndicate to put him into management. In spite of his expressed faith in the play, he declines to lay out his own money over a copyright performance, or to secure the play by a small payment on account, because "it might not be a success, you know." An author dependent upon his pen for a livelihood cannot copyright his play himself; and so the whole business falls through. There are a hundred excuses for the actor to shuffle out of his verbal contract; he cannot find a backer; he has just been offered an engagement which prevents him from doing anything on his own account; he is going on tour; he will buy the play if it turns out a success after it has been tried—and so on. And the worst of it is, when once an author has fitted one actor with a part in vain, he will rarely meet with another to take the luckless play off his hands. As for a farcical comedy with good parts all round, there is absolutely no market for it, unless the author goes into management himself. In the case of a modern burlesque, a musical comedy, or a light opera, the difficulties to be surmounted by the playwright are even greater. Only those authors, in short, who are enjoying sub-

stantial incomes from previous successes can hope to gain the ear of responsible managers; the rest, lacking the one thing needful to bring their work forward, must of necessity go to the wall.

For this state of things I fear there is no remedy, short of a return to the old system of stock companies in town and country. Mr. George Alexander is credited with a desire to discover new playwrights; yet his stipulation that all plays must be type-written imposes rather too much upon the poor but honest penman. Sir Henry Irving, Mr. Toole, and Mr. Tree have certainly introduced the work of new comers to the stage, but it should be recollected that these had already obtained some eminence in other walks of literature. With two or three marked exceptions, managers identified with particular theatres no longer exist; there is everywhere so much sub-letting for short seasons that managers may be said to "come like shadows, so depart." Formerly an author could send in his play to any one of the London theatres, and at least expect it to be read. Now things are different. "The old order changeth, giving place to the new."

Without asserting that there is a dearth of good plays, or that the present touring system is a mistake, I cannot help thinking that more encouragement should be given to playwrights comparatively unknown. I say *comparatively* unknown, in contradistinction to the Great Unacted; because many playwrights whose names were constantly before the public ten or fifteen years ago now never adorn a playbill. They have been compelled to turn their attention to other things. Some have taken to acting, others to stage or business management; while others have become absorbed in the vast anonymity of journalism. Others, again, are numbered among the novelists and book producers of the day. Novelists no longer dramatise their own works, conscious of the impossibility of getting them produced, save at their own expense. This, in my opinion, is not as it should be.

To bring these random reflections to a close. If, in the course of the next few years, there should be a tendency to return to the old stock seasons and companies, the playwrights at present left out in the cold may take hope. I am informed by suburban managers that, however willing they might be to revert to the old order, they could not meet the public demands for the latest West-end successes; while to produce the old stock plays—now that their patrons have been educated up to better things—would be fatal. It seems to me, therefore, that if the authors of the latest London successes were to form a Dramatic Authors' Society amongst themselves, and, abolishing the touring system, let out their plays for short periods to stock companies in town and country, their

emoluments would be none the less, their plays would be just as well presented, the money now spent in railway travelling would be saved, and a way would be opened up for the productions of lesser known playwrights, as of yore.

THE FIRST EDITORS OF SHAKSPERE.

By Francis Ormathwaite.

ONLY within the last few days has public honour been done to two Englishmen who nearly three centuries ago earned the gratitude of all posterity. On the 15th of July, under the trees on the south side of the church of St. Mary the Virgin, Aldermanbury—the church in which, by the way, Milton took to himself his second wife, and Judge Jeffreys was buried—the Lord Mayor, in his robes of state, unveiled a monument to John Heminge and Henry Condell, the fellow players, the friends, and the first editors of Shakspere. It is not a little surprising that their claims to such a tribute should have been ignored so long. In 1623, about seven years after Shakspere's premature death, they were moved by an affectionate reverence for his memory to bring out the first collective edition of his works, all printed "according to the true originall copies." In this way they probably saved from oblivion many plays which had not been printed during his life, and which existed only as prompt-books. Among them were *Macbeth*, *As You Like It*, *Coriolanus*, *Julius Cæsar*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Twelfth Night*, *Measure for Measure*, *A Winter's Tale*, *The Tempest*, *Timon of Athens*, *Cymbeline*, *King John*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Henry VI.*, and *The Comedy of Errors*. Merely to state as much is to class Heminge and Condell with the benefactors of mankind. It may be assumed that they had no hope or expectation of pecuniary reward; the publication was of an expensive character, and the only previous collection of a dramatist's works, those of Ben Jonson, does not appear to have been successful. Nor can we refuse them the credit of a little self-sacrifice, as the attractive power of the plays at the theatre might have been lessened by their publication. "We have but collected them," write the pair, "and done an office to the dead to procure his orphanes guardians, without ambition either of selfe-profit or fame, onely to keepe the memory of so worthy a friend and fellow alive as was our Shakespeare. . . . It had bene a thing, we confesse, worthie to have bene wished, that the author himselfe had liv'd to have set forth and overseene his owne writings; but since it hath

bin ordain'd otherwise, and he by death departed from that right, we pray you do not envie his friends the office of their care and paine to have collected and publish'd them, absolute in their numbers as he conceived them; who, as he was a happie imitator of nature was a most gentle expresser of it. His mind and hand went together, and what he thought he uttered with that easinesse that would have scarse received from him a blot in his papers." Of the biographical interest of this preface it is needless to speak. Still less necessary is it to dwell upon the importance of the service they performed in preserving the plays we have mentioned. Nevertheless, that service is unknown except to a limited few, as nearly all the editions of Shakspere are without the preface and the dedication. No monument has hitherto been erected to their memory, in spite of the wave of enthusiasm with regard to Shakspere that the last century has seen in more than one country. Four years ago, however, Mr. Alfred Calmour suggested that a public subscription should be raised to meet this want. The idea was not widely caught up, but has been acted upon by Mr. Charles Clement Walker, of Lilleshall Old Hall, Shropshire, at his own cost. Appropriately enough, the monument has been set up in Aldermanbury, where the two players lived more than half their lives, brought up large families, and, with their wives, were buried.

As may be supposed, a large crowd assembled outside the churchyard to witness the unveiling. Inside the gates were several men who have made Shakspere's life and work a subject of special study—the American Ambassador, Sir Henry Irving, Sir Theodore Martin, Dr. F. J. Furnivall, Mr. Edgar Flower, Mr Frederick Hawkins, Mr. F. R. Benson, and, last but not least, Mr. Alfred Calmour, whose biography of the illustrious dramatist has taken high rank among works of the kind. Lord Ronald Gower, the Lady Mayoress, and Archdeacon Sinclair were also present. It is significant of the progress made by the stage since the time of Elizabeth that the ceremony should have been performed by the chief magistrate of the City of London, from which, it will be remembered, the players, as a result of the upheaval of puritanical feeling, were long excluded. In the course of a graceful little speech, the Lord Mayor "gave utterance to a reproach, in which he was willing to bear a share, that it had not occurred to any of the citizens of London, to any of the aldermen or residents in that particular Ward, to honour the memory of the public benefactors who lay buried in their midst." The monument—made of polished Aberdeen red granite—is of simple and pleasing design. On the pedestal are ablets with inscriptions showing what Heminge and Condell did.

In the middle we have an open book in light grey granite, representing the title page of, and a portion of the preface to, the first folio. Surmounting all is a bronze bust of Shakspere, modelled after the monument at Stratford and the Droeshout portrait. It may astonish some to hear that this is the only public bust of the poet in the City of London. No portraits of Heminge and Condell are known to exist; otherwise, we dare say, they would have been utilised in medallion form. Mr. Bayard was not prepared with a speech, but readily complied with a request to deliver one. He described Shakspere as the most marvellous intellect the Almighty had sent to our race, as the master-mind of English expression. "To this plain citizen," he went on, "nothing could be more grateful than the fact that the unbought affection and disinterested service of two working companions had rescued from oblivion a large part of his priceless work. It would not be well that on such an occasion as this the voice of the people of the United States should not be heard in unison with the voice of the people of Great Britain. Some things are incapable of division, and the glories of a common literature must be shared on both sides of the Atlantic." Sir Henry Irving, responding to a general call, not only from those concerned in the ceremony, but from the dense crowd outside, also said a few words. As usual, he spoke with a strong sense of the dignity of his profession. He pointed out that the plays we have mentioned were printed from "prompt" copies, which might have been scattered and destroyed if these two humble fellow-workers had not had their "happy and blessed inspiration." The monument just unveiled was one more acknowledgment of their immortality. They had as little expectation of that as of being invited to the table of the Lord Mayor of London three centuries ago. "The hospitality of the City," Sir Henry continued, "has wider amenities now; and you, my Lord Mayor, have graciously shown how fitting is the civic pride which honours the memory of these two citizens, these two players, who lived in affectionate friendship with a fellow player —William Shakspere—and handed on the glory to future ages of this supreme genius of literature." A pleasing souvenir of the occasion was furnished by Mr. Walker himself, in the form of an illustrated quarto as to Heminge and Condell, in which, however, he fell into the error of mistaking mere tradition for undoubted fact. It would be interesting to know on what authority he states that Shakspere "always lived in lodgings," "never brought his family to London," and wrote *The Merry Wives of Windsor* to gratify Queen Elizabeth with a sight of Falstaff in love. Mr. Walker also refers to Bacon as "Lord"

Bacon—an extremely vulgar error—and to James Burbage as "John" Burbage. He can also inform us that blank verse "had been successfully employed by Marlowe, *a* dramatist." For the rest, the ceremony in the old City churchyard was followed by a luncheon at the Mansion House, the company including all the visitors we have named.

Four days previously, it may be added here, a stained glass window to the memory of Philip Massinger, a few of whose plays lived on the stage down to the present century, was unveiled in the new nave of St. Saviour's, Southwark, where, in the grave of his collaborator, John Fletcher, he was buried in 1639 as "a stranger"—that is to say, as a non-parishioner. Of his most famous work, *A New Way to Pay Old Debts*, we gave an account this time last year, on the occasion of the reproduction in our pages of Clint's picture, presented to the Garrick Club by Sir Henry Irving, of Edmund Kean in the last scene. Hardly less remarkable, however, are his *Virgin Martyr*, *Duke of Milan*, *City Madam*, and *Fatal Dowry*, the last of which was practically stolen by Rowe in *The Fair Penitent*. Notwithstanding the unfavourable criticism of Lamb and others, Massinger's plays have a distinct value of their own, and it may be hoped that before long his name will again appear in a London playbill. He was no stranger to poverty, as most of his dedications will show. In a letter to Henslowe, written about 1614, in conjunction with Daborne and Field, he plaintively asks for five pounds on account for the "new play," whichever it may have been. He died suddenly in a house on Bankside, hard by the Globe Theatre. Sir Walter Besant unveiled the memorial window—a single lancet, with a portrait of the dramatist and a scene from *The Virgin Martyr* as its principal features. It was announced by the rector, Dr. Thompson, that a project was on foot to pay similar tributes in the church to Shakspere, Alleyn, and Beaumont and Fletcher. Old prejudices against plays and players are fast dying out, and the presence of the Bishop of Southwark at the ceremony in St. Saviour's does not point to their resuscitation.

THEATRICAL BRICKS AND MORTAR.

By John Hollingshead.

PEOPLE tired of the respectable monotony of the so-called "3 Per Cents.," which, at the present price of Consols, is a name and nothing more—people sick of reading every week the stereotyped announcement, "the Bank rate of discount

remains at 2 per cent."—people who go to their bankers with money to put "on call," and, if not politely bowed out of the inner lucre shop, are unblushingly offered half a per cent. per annum, naturally inquire what they are to do with their stagnant capital, and vulgar echo answers, "Ask another riddle." If they are too shrewd, timid, or cautious to listen to the voice of the joint-stock charmer, they naturally turn a longing eye to bricks and mortar, and bricks and mortar to the ordinary eye always take the form of shops and dwelling-houses. If any demon whispered "build a theatre," he would be looked upon as a wicked and heartless demon—a cruel deluder—a will-o'-the-wisp of the most poisonous and hateful kind. Ignorance is the mother of suspicion, and the demon—black, white, or whitey-brown—in spite of suspicion, would be right.

There is no pounds, shillings, or pence investment known to "those in the trade" that can equal the building of a right theatre at the right time and in the right place. The builder must not pay too much for his ground, but must select, if possible, a cleared site. If he buys buildings to pull down and make a site, he must see that the rentals are not too heavy—that the property is not a fancy property. Every rental pulled down goes to swell the natural ground rent. That is a mathematical demonstration. The theatre builder does not want a frontage like a new bank or a new hotel. He wants access to a chief thoroughfare if he can get it, or a thoroughfare that is in the tide of progress, and he can build his temple of the drama on a back stable-yard, and the storehouses of ashes and vegetable refuse. A twenty-feet frontage will fulfil the requirements of the licensing authorities, and this will save him the expense of a Renaissance elevation, with the inevitable and conventional "Mansard" towers. He must be careful about "ancient lights" and more ancient cesspools. The latter mean future trouble, the former present litigation. In old neighbourhoods these "lights"—often the property of poor landlords and poorer tenants—are generally in the hands of some local jobbing solicitor, who undertakes to defend the "rights" as speculative business.

The investor as theatre builder will select a sound architect, but will not "give him his head." He will know the size of his ground and what he can put upon it, and if he is wise he will not go too far towards heaven with his gallery (on a limited foundation), as the sixpenny audiences object to look down upon a stage from the top of a monument to get a view of the heads of actors and study how their wigs are parted. He will so edit his architect that there are no columns and architectural projections put in for building effect, and the perpetual annoyance of humble play-

goers. He will keep steadily in mind that a theatre should be a place in which so many people can sit, see, hear, and breathe. He should provide the utmost possible sanitary decency and comfort, not only for audiences in front of the curtain, but for actors and actresses behind the curtain, decent dressing-rooms, a comfortable green-room, and a plentiful supply of water. With such a plan, honestly carried out, he will have a dozen substantial offers for his theatre before he has built the ground floor, or decided upon a title.

His position as a landlord will be unique and peculiar. While holders of house-property have to wait for their rent, he will always have his dues a quarter in advance, and will hold this quarter till the end of the lease, or the day of Judgment. While holders of house-property have to sue for dilapidations, he will have a sum—probably £1,000—placed in a bank by his tenant as security for these covenants, the money standing in the joint names of owner and occupier. While holders of house-property have a right of entry reserved in the lease, for the inspection of unruly drains, or stopping the bursting of an unruly water-pipe, he will not only have the right of entry to the theatre, at all times, before and behind the curtain, but the right, for ever, to the sole use and occupancy of one private box and two orchestral stalls, with probably a power of writing orders for the dress-circle. His tenant will relieve him of the duty of paying rates, taxes, and insurance, which is not always the case with house-property, and will undertake, when his lease expires and he gives up possession of the theatre, to leave enough of stock in scenery, dresses, properties, and machinery, for the next tenant to begin ordinary business with. To secure this last covenant, most theatrical leases provide that nothing of this kind—"fixtures" or not "fixtures"—that once goes into a theatre, shall go out of it again without the knowledge and consent of the landlord. The return for this maximum of security and this minimum of risk is a percentage which would make a house-owner's mouth water. It varies from 10 to 20 per cent. per annum, the average probably being about 15 per cent. When a tenant breaks down or finishes his tenancy there is no difficulty in finding another, and an unusual closure of a few weeks, or even months, is amply covered by the solid deposits.

As I am dealing with facts and not with theories, I may quote a few figures for the comfort of investors. I am not writing this article to persuade capitalists to build theatres, as I am notoriously far more careful of other people's money than I am of my own. I am writing it to dispel an illusion that there are already too many theatres in London—meaning a small part of

central London—an illusion that will not bear the quotation of existing rentals, to say nothing of the list of distinguished and responsible actor-managers, who are waiting patiently for the existing temples—those that are eligible—to be disengaged. The Gaiety, built in 1868, was entirely produced for £15,000. The original rental, with two of the best boxes reserved, was £3,500 a year, and this *without bars*, which belonged (and still belong) to the restaurant. This increased the rent another £1,000 a year, and the tenant paid rates, taxes, and insurance, including the land-tax. When, owing to the death of the landlord, the two proprietary boxes were thrown into the theatre, the rent (by arrangement) was increased to £4,000. This rent, punctually paid for 18 years, bought the freehold, built and furnished the theatre, and gave a bonus of £18,000. The Comedy Theatre, according to evidence given some years ago in a law court, was built and opened for £6,000. The ground rent was not stated, but Panton-street twenty years ago was not a costly district. The theatre, of course, has since been much altered and improved. The Lyric Theatre in Shaftesbury-avenue was largely built upon municipal ground, bearing a rental just over £1,000 a year. Some houses in a back street were bought, and the old Café de L'Etoile, in Windmill-street, was thrown into the site. The freehold of the Municipal ground was eventually bought, probably at twenty-five years' purchase, and the whole is now said to be mortgaged for £90,000. In certain legal proceedings lately in the Bankruptcy Court, the rent was stated to be £8,000 per annum.

The Shaftesbury Theatre, in Shaftesbury-avenue, was built upon municipal ground, bearing a rental of £800 a year. The theatre was said to have been constructed and opened for £17,000. If the same terms were accepted for the ground as were accepted for the Lyric, this would put the freehold value at £37, 000. The house has been frequently let at £100 a week, notably to Mr. Willard, who paid the same rent for the Garrick. These lettings were not temporary, but for a considerable period. Mr. D'Oyley Carte's Theatre, now "The Palace of Varieties," stood on a municipal ground rent of a little over £1,200 a year, which may, or may not, have been turned into a freehold. On the neighbouring terms this would be £30,000. The building was a fancy building, and cost a fancy price. The Prince of Wales's Theatre in Coventry-street, a smaller house than the Lyric, has always been let at large, and sometimes at enormous rentals. Mrs. Langtry had it at two periods of six months each, paying at the rate of £12,000 per annum. The Kendal tenancy of the Garrick Theatre, no doubt, shows a

rental a little higher than Mr. Willard paid; but I have said enough to show that theatrical bricks and mortar, far from being a speculation, are something more than what is called "a dead certainty." They are a living treasure.

FANCIFUL COMEDY.

By Henry Elliott.

THERE is at least one point of view from which a piece like *The Mummy*, lately produced at one of the London theatres, is always welcome. One is ever glad to get out of the rut of the sordid on the one hand and the extravagant on the other. Of late years our stage has been largely given up to the "problem" drama and the "musical comedy," mitigated by little else than Adelphi melodrama and Shaksperean revival. That being so, it is pleasant every now and then to be taken by a dramatist into the region of the purely fanciful—far away from the realism of *The Benefit of the Doubt* and the banality of *The Shop Girl*. That was what made the Haymarket piece, *Once Upon a Time*, so acceptable to some of us, unsubstantial and short-lived as it proved. It was at least a frank incursion into the realm of the fantastic, the impossible. It was a dramatisation of a fairy tale, and, merely as such, something to be thankful for, especially at the precise juncture at which it appeared. We had got tired of the melancholy of Mrs. Tanqueray and of the cynicism of the Duke of Guisebery, and were glad to bask, if only for a moment, in the quaint simplicities of Hans Christian Andersen, as dressed up for us by Herr Fulda, Mr. L. N. Parker, and Mr. Tree.

In the same way, *The Mummy* is better, perhaps, than nothing. It is, at any rate, a product of the fancy. It takes us out of the common, every-day path—throws a flash of imagination upon the common, every-day life. It is based on the supernatural, and has in it, too, a slight strain of the pseudo-scientific. But that is about all that can be said for it. Apart from this, it irritates—irritates the present writer, if no one else. It irritates because, after all, it is but a re-treatment of an old and even trite idea. It is a lineal descendant from *Pygmalion and Galatea*. In the latter we have a vivified statue brought into humorous contact with a condition of things wholly new to her. This notion was adopted and vulgarised by the Messrs. Paulton in *Niobe All Smiles*, in which the action was laid, not in classic, but in modern times. In *The Mummy* we have an ancient Egyptian vivified and brought into collision with present-day people and

events. Much the same idea (as we have seen) is found at the basis of Mr. Buchanan's *Wanderer from Venus* (why not "Visitor from Venus?"—the alliteration would be effective). Therein the central figure is not a vivified statue (who, by-and-by, returns to stone) or a vivified mummy (who, by-and-by, shrivels into dust), but a celestial stranger (who, in the end, goes as she has come, presumably the wiser, if not the happier, for her experience).

It is not too much to ask that we may now get away from this particular phase or exhibition of the fanciful. Its humorous possibilities are exhausted. The innocent new-comer, who is puzzled by civilisation, and whose every question is productive of equivoque, is played out—for a time, at any rate. Some years hence, no doubt, the type will reappear upon the stage. Our playwrights are fond of riding an idea to death. Take the topsy-turvey principle for example. Mr. Gilbert has executed variations on it during a tolerably long period. It was not a wholly original notion—it was at least as old as *The Antipodes* of Richard Brome, in which the young people ruled the roast and the old people went to school, and so forth (a conception happily utilised by the late Matthew Browne in his verses on *Lilliput Land*). For that matter, Mr. Gilbert has frankly admitted that he drew his *Palace of Truth* from the intellectual stores of Madame de Genlis. The notion of men and women speaking out their real thoughts, while under the impression that they were concealing them, was an admirable one, and, no doubt, suggested to Mr. Gilbert the cynical frankness of the *personæ* in *Engaged*, though in that case the speakers appear to be aware that they are proclaiming their selfishness, of which, however, they are not ashamed.

The topsy-turvey *motif* and the unusual-candour idea are as worn out, for the time, as the "wonderful visitor" notion, and it is to be hoped that they, too, will be relegated to obscurity for a space. But there is no reason why *motifs* quite as good and fruitful should not be invented or discovered. The field is wide, and has not been at all fully occupied. The old "mysteries," and "moralities," and miracle-plays were only coarse dramatisations of the more material elements in popular theology. Equally coarse and material are the more fantastic features of Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*, with its good and bad angels, its incarnations of Lucifer, and Mephistopheles, and the Seven Deadly Sins. Shakspere did less in the direction of fantasy than might, perhaps, have been expected. *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Tempest* are his only "fairy" plays. The world of *As You Like It* is, of course, an impossible one, and yet not wholly fanciful; the masque at the end—so rarely represented in these

days—is of the nature of an excrescence, is not an integral portion of the scheme. The truth is, Shakspere, like most of his contemporaries, was too busily occupied with the romantic on the one side and the realistic on the other, with the historical on the one hand and the contemporary on the other, to be able to spare much time for the purely imaginative. The Elizabethan and Jacobean drama deals, in the main, with men and women as they are—the concrete facts of nature and existence.

The playwrights of Restoration and of Georgian times were even less disposed to lose themselves in the world of the fantastic. *The Antipodes*, to which we have referred, is a somewhat isolated specimen of imaginative effort. Dryden took up the subject of King Arthur, but did not bestow much fancy upon his treatment of it, fertile of suggestion as one would have thought he would have found it. The comedy of intrigue and the drama of bloodshed—these were the things which the dramatists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries set themselves most frequently to produce. What fancy was observable in the stage-work of those times was to be discerned chiefly in the ballets—then so much more dramatic and intelligible than they are now. Gradually there arose a taste for "pantomime"; the old fairy tales (of all countries) became popular for this purpose; and out of the "pantomime" grew the fairy extravaganzas of men like Planché, who were in that sense the creators of the fairy comedies of our day. Planché was certainly the intellectual progenitor of Mr. Gilbert, the chief worker in fanciful comedy in our time. He, in his turn, encouraged Mr. Albery to adventure into a portion of the same territory. *Oriana* and *The Will of Wise King Kino* are little talked of nowadays, but they came between *Pygmalion and Galatea* and *Engaged*, and, had they been less loosely constructed, would probably have held the stage.

They are full of the quality of which I have been writing—fancy. In *Oriana* there is a little fairy, Peep, who has a ring, the property of which is to attract love to whomsoever wears it. That ring passes from hand to hand, and works, of course, a lot of mischief. In *The Will of Wise King Kino* the principle of equality is made to reign throughout Clemantia:—

> Government was quite hard up for Liberal measures,
> And as last year the crops were very bad,
> They laid it all to inequality,
> And said if all distinctions were removed
> The weather would improve, the earth be fruitful,
> The people would work harder and be happy.
> And so they did away with names and titles,
> And everyone is numbered like a cab.

The late Mr. Robert Reece had a vein of fancy, but had no

opportunity of working it. There is fantasy of a kind in Mr. Herman Merivale's *White Pilgrim*, but the fate of that work was not calculated to induce the author to persevere in that line of production. Mr. Pinero's sole incursion in the realm of fancy has been (if I remember rightly) the comedy called *In Chancery*, in which the hero's memory on certain points is affected by a railway accident, and does not come back to him till near the end of the play. He then recognises a familiar object, and recovers the sense of his identity. This obliteration of a portion of a man's existence is, it will be remembered, the basis of Mr. Gilbert's *Foggerty's Fairy*: and *Foggerty's Fairy* came out three years earlier than *In Chancery*.

Mr. Gilbert, however, has proved himself so rich in ideas that he can afford to lend a few to other people. If we glance down the list of his plays, we cannot help noting and admiring the fertility of his fancy—from the "fairy counterparts" in *The Wicked World* and the invisible-making veil in *Broken Hearts* to the love-philtre of *The Sorcerer*, the changed-at-nurse *motif* of *Pinafore*, the apprenticed-to-a-pirate basis of *The Pirates of Penzance*, *et id genus omne*. There have been signs in *The Mountebanks*, *Utopia Limited*, and *The Grand Duke*, that Mr. Gilbert's invention has begun to flag. All the more reason, then, that some one else should come forward and continue the tradition of the fanciful, the fantastic, the eccentric in comedy. As yet he has had imitators rather than successors. Mr. Sydney Grundy has written operatic librettos, but they are in the Gilbertian manner; albeit there was undoubted humour in *The Vicar of Bray*, though sadly little in *Haddon Hall*. What there is of fancy in *A Pair of Spectacles* is mainly suggestive, the notion being that old Benjamin changes his mental and moral nature when he puts on the spectacles of his brother Gregory; and for this, I suppose, the credit, such as it is, must be given to the author of the French original. Slight, however, as is the fancifulness in this comedy, it is sufficient to impart to it a certain freshness and piquancy which is very agreeable and acceptable. Would that there were more such fancy in the dramatic output of to-day!

MARIE ANTOINETTE AND THE STAGE.

By Frederick Hawkins.

IT is permissible to suppose that if Marie Antoinette had been of comparatively humble birth and training she would have made the stage her profession. From her girlhood she took a

warm interest in the drama and its votaries. Probably that interest was deepened by the teachings of one of her tutors. In or about 1768, it seems, a cultivated French actress, Félicité Fleury, was shamefully deserted in Vienna by her husband, a Vicomte Clairval de Passy. Marie Antoinette's hand had been promised to the Dauphin, and Mlle. Fleury, after being received at the imperial palace, was employed by Joseph II. and Maria Theresa to help in the literary education of the young Archduchess. "It was my sister's particular duty," writes the tutor's brother, Joseph Fleury, who in the course of a few years became one of the pillars of the Comédie Française, and to whose memoirs, injudiciously expanded by Lafitte from the correspondence of the time, I am almost exclusively indebted for any attraction this little paper may possess, "to instruct her imperial pupil in the correct pronunciation of our language, and to make her write passages from the works of our best dramatic poets." No doubt the task was an easy one, as the Princess was quick, and eager to identify herself with everything French. "But," continues Fleury, "this kind of dramatic professorship did not last long. Louis XV., now austere on the subject of religion," though he did not give up the society of Madame du Barri, "requested his Ambassador, the Marquis de Barfort, to signify to the Empress his disapproval of the Archduchess's dramatic recitations; and soon afterwards Félicité was superseded by the Abbé Vermond."

Marie Antoinette had not been in France very long before acting in plays at Court became her favourite diversion. Private theatricals were again the rage of the hour; and the young Queen, as may be supposed, found in them the most congenial means of relieving the monotony of her life. Having taken lessons from Dugazon, of the Comédie Française, she proposed to fit up a theatre in Versailles. Louis XVI. at first opposed the project. He did not care very much for the drama, and was of opinion that a Queen of France could not appear on the stage without loss of dignity. Eventually, however, he consented to performances being given at the Petit Trianon, where etiquette was less stringent than at Versailles. The company included the Comte de Provence and the Comte d'Artois, afterwards Louis XVIII. and Charles X. respectively. As a rule, the piece given was a short comedy or a light opera, a distinguished actor from Paris acting as master of the ceremonies. "At rehearsal," we are told, "the Queen was sprightly and good-humoured; she laughed at her own mistakes, and would readily go over a scene again if it were thought necessary." Now and then a little "brush" occurred among the players. Her majesty asked the

Comtesse de Provence to assume a particular part. The King of Sardinia's daughter declined, on the ground that it was incompatible with her birth to appear before an audience. "But," said Marie Antoinette, "if I, the Queen of France, act in plays, surely you ought not to have scruples on the point." "Though not a Queen," retorted the Comtesse, "I am of the stuff of which Queens are made." Marie Antoinette, piqued, rather plainly indicated her opinion that the House of Austria was higher than the House of Savoy, and was not inferior to the House of Bourbon itself. "Madame," remarked the Comte d'Artois, coming forward, "I have not yet ventured to intrude upon your conversation, as I thought you were angry: now I see that you are only jesting"—a piece of sarcasm which abruptly ended the fray. Louis XVI. often looked in at the rehearsals. If the Queen had to kiss or be kissed, he would cough, swing himself back in his chair, and otherwise betray a little irritation. "These things," he once said, "may be done in the performance, but not before." Consequently, instead of kissing, the gentleman simply raised the lace on their shirt-frills to their lips. For a time Marie Antoinette was satisfied to take unimportant parts. "Yesterday," I read in the *Correspondence Secrète* for 1777, "the Queen gave a fête yet more brilliant than its predecessor. The scene was a fair; ladies of the Court represented vendors; the Queen sold coffee as a *limonadière*." Presently, however, she made bolder experiments, appearing in *Les Fausses Infidélités* (an adaptation in one act of *The Merry Wives of Windsor*), *La Gageure Imprévue*, *Blaize et Babet*, *Le Devin de Village*, *Le Barbier de Séville*, *On ne s'avise jamais de tout*, and *Le Roi et le Fermier*. Here is the bill of the last-mentioned piece:—

Le Roi	... ...	M. le Comte d'Adhémar.
Richard	... ...	M. le Comte de Vaudreuil.
Un Garde	... ...	M. le Comte d'Artois.
Jenny	... ...	La Reine.
Betty	... ...	Madame la Duchesse de Guise.
La Mère	... ...	Madame Diane de Polignac.

It is sufficiently clear that the Queen's acting, if never great, had the charms of ease, intelligence, and personal grace. Nothing, we learn, could have been more delightful than her way of half singing, half reciting these lines in *Blaize et Babet*—

> Le soir on danse sur l'herbette;
> Blaize et moi nous dansions tous deux;
> Mais il me quitta pour Lisette,
> Qui vient se mêler à nos jeux.

In comedy she was less successful than in operettas, though her

soubrette in *La Gageure Imprévue* won the admiration of the most cool-headed spectators.

Unfortunately, Marie Antoinette was led by her histrionic sympathies to meddle with the internal affairs of the Comédie Française. One proof of this is indirectly furnished by Fleury, who, thanks in some measure to her goodwill, but in a larger measure, I must add, to his own gifts, had obtained a footing in that historic theatre at a comparatively early age. In 1779, a furious quarrel arose between two distinguished actresses, Madame Vestris and Mlle. Sainval, as to the allotment of particular parts. The whole of the outside world took one side or the other; neutrality seemed to be quite out of the question. Finding that the *Journal de Paris*, by a despotic stroke of authority, had been forbidden to insert a reply to a letter from Madame Vestris on the subject, Mlle. Sainval, with the aid of a literary friend, Madame de Saint-Chamont, brought out a pamphlet setting forth her wrongs, giving private letters, and even going so far as to sneer at the Court. For her trouble she was exiled by the First Gentleman of the Chamber, the Duc de Duras, who happened to be on intimate terms with her rival. Fleury had a patroness at Court in Madame Campan, and was courageous enough to say a word in favour of the culprit. "Mlle. Sainval," was the reply, "would have done well to remain silent. She seems to look upon the Court of Versailles as no better than the Court of King Pétau." Here, lowering her voice, Madame Campan glanced at a half-opened glazed door, behind which the Queen was probably standing, "By implication," the speaker went on, "she scruples not to say that our young monarch is led by the nose, and that his august consort, regardless of the dignity maintained by our late Queen, concerns herself with stage intrigues and the quarrels of players." This was also said in a low tone, with another glance towards the door. "Then, Madame," the actor asked, "we cannot count upon a reparation of this injustice?" Wait until the proper time comes," returned Madame Campan, "and particularly recommend Mlle. Sainval not to take up her pen again as a pamphleteer." The terrible democracy of Paris, already bent upon revolution, warmly espoused the exile's cause, chiefly because, unlike her rival, she was not the mistress of an aristocrat. Her younger sister soon afterwards played Aménaïde in Voltaire's *Tancrède*. Her appearance on the stage was hailed with tremendous enthusiasm; and the roar that followed her delivery of one line—

L'injustice à la fin produit l'indépendance—

was one never to be forgotten.

Incredible as it may seem, the Queen went to the length of arranging a theatrical marriage without the knowledge of the persons immediately concerned. It was proposed that the vacancy caused by the banishment of Mlle. Sainval should be filled by Mlle. Raucourt, who achieved a remarkable success at the Comédie Française in 1772, but who, persecuted by a swarm of creditors, fled from Paris about four years afterwards. Prince Henry of Prussia and the Prince de Ligne had been induced to write to Versailles in her behalf, and the Gentlemen of the Chamber decided to have her reinstated at the Comédie. They did so at the instance of Marie Antoinette, who showed the "strongest interest in and regard for her." Not a few of the players opposed the order, really on the ground that her way of life had brought discredit upon the House of Molière, but ostensibly, in order to avoid giving needless offence at Court, because she was still heavily in debt. "Is that all?" the Queen innocently asked. "That difficulty is soon got over. *I* will pay her debts. How much does she owe?" "One hundred thousand crowns, your majesty." This gave the Queen pause. It was certainly a large sum. Mlle. Raucourt—who, by the way, was posing as a Magdalen—would have to take her chance. Meanwhile, as a means of protecting her from temptation, would it not be well to get her married to a member of the Comédie Française? "Fleury," said the Queen to that young player at Court, "I have chosen a wife for you. I wish you to marry Mlle. Raucourt. She is about to resume her place at the theatre. You know she is pretty and clever, and I have her promise of good conduct for the future. I am sure you cannot do better." Fleury, overwhelmed with surprise and consternation, asked for time to consider the idea, a request too reasonable in the circumstances to be refused. One evening, in a secluded part of the park at Versailles, a letter from Raucourt was thrust into his hand. "I know," she wrote, "of an infallible way of defeating this project. Say nothing, but leave the affair to my management. I will save you, though it be at my own expense." Notwithstanding this, it was in a state of anxiety hardly to be described that the player next presented himself to the Queen. "Ah, Fleury," said the Comte de Provence, "you have come very *à propros* to receive at once my compliments and condolences." "What has happened?" the Queen asked in a kind tone. "How, Madame? Has your majesty not heard? Mlle. Raucourt has played a most shameful trick upon the Comte d'Artois and this poor fellow. Our sublime Melpomene has deprived Comte d'Artois of the captain of his guards by eloping with the Prince d'Hénin," Sophie Arnould's erstwhile lover, "at the same time eloping from the affection of

M. Fleury. See how disconsolate he looks!" Very disconsolate, no doubt. "Fleury," said the Queen, "I suspect that you are not sorry for this?" He smilingly bowed. "Well," continued her majesty, "I see my mistake, M. Fleury, and begin to think that I could not have selected a lady likely to make a worse wife for you than Mlle. Raucourt."

Marie Antoinette's interest in plays and players lasted until the storm of the Revolution broke over her in all its fury. Deficient in political foresight, she exercised her influence in favour of the production of the *Mariage de Figaro*, one of the heaviest blows ever dealt at the existing frame of society in France. Madame Campan read the manuscript to the King and Queen almost as soon as it was sent in. "Detestable," said Louis XVI. of Figaro's famous soliloquy; "the piece shall never be played. M. de Beaumarahais scoffs at everything that should be respected in Government." The "everything," it may be observed, included lettres de cachet, a fettered Press, a grinding censorship, and the exclusive privileges of the noblesse. "So the comedy will not be produced?" asked the Queen at the end, clearly in a tone of disappointment. "It will not," answered the King. Yet produced it was, as the author, in addition to his astuteness and irrepressible energy, had the advantage of her support. Her last visit to a theatre seems to have been in 1791, when, with her children, she saw *La Gouvernante*, a piece by Lachaussée, at the Comédie Française. In less than two years from this date she was on the scaffold in the Place de la Révolution, dying with the serene courage and dignity to be looked for in a true daughter of the Cæsars.

COLLABORATION.—I.

By Murray Carson.

THERE is no reason to suppose that some remarks on the subject of collaboration will prove either distasteful or uninteresting to those who are concerned with dramatic affairs, nor that the inability to arrive at any definite conclusion in the inquiry will lessen the advantage of the argument. It is only proposed here to set forth some points both for and against a partnership in play-making without relying on practical illustration from either present or past playwrights. It is necessary, however, before going further, to refer, though briefly, to the commonest form of collaboration—the enforced partnership of the

actor-manager. It is no part of the issue to discuss whether more plays are made successful or more ruined by the autocratic treatment to which in many instances they are subjected after they have been approved and accepted, or whether it is fair to present Mr. Jones's play—I do not mean, of course, any particular Mr. Jones—to the public as Mr. Jones's play, when it no longer bears the faintest resemblance in theme or in treatment to the original manuscript. This is a condition of things entirely in the author's hands. If he is anxious to have his play produced by a certain management, it may be, and very often is, to his material advantage to have it "pulled into shape during rehearsals." On the other hand, the play may be ruined; but, once having admitted the partner, the author cannot, in fairness, rebel if the result proves disastrous. This is so manifestly absurd that it would not be set down here but for the fact that it is an all too common occurrence. The sale of a play must be a business transaction, and a sheet of note paper will hold all the conditions which the author may think necessary to protect his rights. He is really the master of the situation; the play is his, and he may sell or let it with or without leave to alter it, as he thinks fit. But, once having made the bargain, he has only two courses—to sue for breach of contract or accept the situation, and, like a sensible man, for ever after hold his peace. He is, of course, at liberty, like others who make mistakes, to discuss it with his friends, and, if possible, enlist their sympathies; but to indulge in violent letters to the papers, and murderous attacks on the long-suffering actor-manager, is likely to end in exciting ridicule. Given the right combination, it seems, on the surface, obvious that "two heads are better than one;" though please take note, on the other hand, "too many cooks spoil the broth." Many of the most successful plays of this or any other age have been the result of collaboration, yet none of them more successful than hosts of plays invented and written by one author.

The dramatised novel is a case in favour of collaboration. A novel is seldom done into a play by the author unaided. A skilled dramatist is called in, who turns out an actable play, where the novelist, if left to himself, might probably fail. All the literary talent in the world will not make a presentable play, unaided by the dramatic touch. On the other hand, the baldest narrative, the simplest scheme, the oldest situations, may become a dramatic gem when set and polished by the imagery and art of the poet. The translation and adaptation of foreign plays is, of course, in most cases collaboration; formerly it was necessary to cleanse many of them so thoroughly that they came

from the wash altered beyond recognition. But now it is advisable to heighten, or let us say, broaden, the original effects. There are many other forms of collaboration too numerous to discuss. The actor, the theatre, the weather, your luck, any one of these, according to your "kind friends in front," will make your p'ay a good one or a bad one, a success or a failure—they are your collaborators.

For a real dramatic partnership many qualities are essential. One is a decided taste for argument, coupled with a vocabulary of forcible, if not elegant, terms of expression. You must also possess what I should describe as the gift of annexation (quite a common gift nowadays). This will enable you, when your partner has a really brilliant idea, to talk him into the conviction that it is your scheme, that it is very fine, and that he ought to be very grateful to you for it. This requires a little practice, but it will come with time, and it is invaluable. These gifts, with a good appetite (joint authors dine together frequently and well), constitute the requirements of a collaborator. There is one drawback to collaboration—you have to share the fees. Of course if you did not collaborate there would not be any to share.

To state the case briefly both for and against. On the one hand you have the author setting forth his own ideas, the result of his own observations, in his own way, faulty perhaps, but bearing the stamp of individuality. In the joint production you will probably get more smoothness, the result of counter-criticism; but you may miss the individualism, the personality, so to speak, which will help to make a fine play, while better workmanship may end in "dead perfection." But this is not a necessity; and if you can get the breadth of treatment, which should be the result of collaboration, without losing the force of the personal note, which, paradoxical as it sounds, can certainly obtain—why, then, there is something very strong to be said in favour of a play-making partnership. The subject is one that is worthy of much consideration on the part of those who have at heart the welfare of the national drama.

ROYALTIES ON SHAKSPERE.

By W. Davenport Adams.

THE New York *Spirit of the Times* has suggested that every English-speaking manager producing in future a Shaksperean play should contribute a small royalty on every performance

to a fund to be devoted, first to a memorial to Shakspere, and afterwards to charities connected with the stage. The royalty proposed per representation is ten dollars in America and £2 in England and elsewhere. The exact sum, however, is not at present a matter of discussion. It might be desirable not to fix upon any definite amount: the payment of any royalty at all would of course be voluntary, and so, too, might well be the extent of the payment. Some managers might give more, some less. It is hardly for those who are not managers to dogmatise upon the subject. Details must be left to those immediately concerned. There is, indeed, something the least bit officious in this suggested percentage on managerial receipts. Why only the producers of Shakspere? Why not those who enact him? There are, I suspect, occasions on which Shakspere, while not exactly spelling ruin, spells, nevertheless, comparatively small gain. Nowadays there are only two possible ways of presenting the Bard—in a big city like London with beauty and magnitude of detail, or on tour through the country with (in the main) such scenery and appointments as the local managements can furnish. In the first instance, the receipts, no doubt, are large, but the expenses are apt to be large also. Several thousands are spent before the curtain rises, and several hundreds a week while it is pulled up nightly. In the latter case, the expenses, no doubt, are small, but the receipts are apt to be small likewise—not too small for a profit, we may assume, but scarcely of a sort to make the payment of a royalty of no consequence to the travelling *entrepreneur*.

That, however, is a point for the *entrepreneur* himself to decide upon. The essence of the scheme is its voluntary nature. Not even the *Spirit of the Times* can put a tax forcibly upon the providers of entertainment. The producers of Shakspere, it is admitted, will pay the proposed royalty, or they will not. Suppose that they do: will the pecuniary results per annum be particularly large? Is Shakspere played so very much either here or in America or in the Colonies? He is often in the bill at the Lyceum; but what manager, English, or American, or Colonial, equals or even approaches Sir Henry Irving in the honour he does practically to the Bard—namely, by the frequent performance of his works? At the Haymarket Mr. Tree has given us three Shaksperean revivals; but, apart from the Lyceum and the Haymarket, what, of late years, is Shakspere's record in London? In the country the Shaksperean tradition has been kept alive by Mr. F. R. Benson, Mr. Ben Greet, and the two Messrs. Tearle; but what are they among so many? It seems to me that, even if every producer of Shakspere undertook

to contribute some sort of royalty, we could not expect the fund to swell to very notable proportions for some years to come; and as regards the humbler Shakspere producers we could not be quite sure that they would pay tribute either regularly or at all. A large income yearly from Shaksperean royalties is not, I fear, to be looked for, even though England be joined in the scheme by America, Canada, and Australia. A few first-class managers would contribute not only invariably but liberally, as is their wont; but what about the rest? Much allowance would have to be made for lukewarmness, for (shall we say?) stinginess, for lack of good "business," and other discouraging and deterring causes.

However, that contributions would come in is certain, and the outcome of the movement would be an annual sum of tolerably fair amount. The *Spirit of the Times's* notion, apparently, is that the first ten years' income should go towards the provision of some sort of memorial to Shakspere—"the man who created the English drama, the English theatres, managers, and actors as we know them, and who was himself a dramatist, manager, and actor." Let there be a memorial to Shakspere by all means. I do not, personally, think that he requires any; his works are his monument, and wherever they are found he cannot, obviously, be forgotten. There are many people and things connected with the stage and drama that need a memorial very much more than Shakspere does. Still, there may be ways in which he can appropriately be celebrated. A theatre in London, in New York, in Montreal, in Melbourne, devoted solely to the production of his plays—that would be a memorial towards which many would gladly give their vote and mite. There is some fear lest, if we do not take care, the traditions of Shaksperean acting may gradually disappear. Shakspere, the poet, is assured of immortality so long as a printing-press is in existence; but Shakspere, the dramatist, may some day be unactable for lack of actors who have the culture and experience necessary for interpreting him as he ought to be interpreted.

I repeat, let us have, by all means, a memorial to Shakspere; but for anything but the most modest monument there is not likely to be sufficient income, even in the ten years named. The *Spirit of the Times* is willing enough that, at the expiration of the decade, the royalties should go to theatrical charities; and that arrangement, of course, would meet with unanimous and widespread approval. Our leading managers are already generous contributors to such charities; but they would raise no objection, we may be sure, to do what more is asked of them for the sake and in the name of Shakspere. It would be well, indeed, if the

name of Shakspere could be closely associated with these royalties when they come to be applied to professional purposes. It would be a pity to let them be swallowed up, unrecognised and unacknowledged, in the general fund. When the memorial has been erected, let the managerial committee (which must needs be formed if the scheme take practical shape) bethink itself of some method by which, while the charities are assisted, Shakspere's name may be perpetuated in connection with them. Some opportunity might be found for the encouragement of acting in Shaksperean parts, for the reward of distinction in Shaksperean study. Could we have a Shakspere home for venerable or retired players, a Shakspere wing to a hospital, a Shakspere library at an orphanage?

Not that any one of these things is essential to the utility of the scheme. Shakspere's bland and universal eye is likely to dwell well pleased upon any scheme by which the profession to which he belonged—to which he belonged before he was a dramatist, if not before he was a poet—may be promoted. His spirit, as well as the *Spirit of the Times*, would be gratified by any plan that would help the players of the present and the future. At the same time, Shakspere, who was himself a manager, would be equally likely to disapprove of anything which would hamper his successors in the business of entertainment. The *Spirit of the Times* has made an ingenious suggestion. We shall see how it is received, not only by managers of the first rank, whose acquiescence may be relied upon, but by the goodly fellowship of the managers generally. It is they, after all, with whom the matter rests, and must rest.

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MR. LIONEL BROUGH & MR. SYDNEY BROUGH.

Portraits.

MR. LIONEL BROUGH AND MR. SYDNEY BROUGH.

IN South Lambeth, at no great distance from the chief residence of the Archbishop of Canterbury, is an old house in which the forger Fauntleroy lived for some time before his arrest, and which is supposed to be haunted to this day by the shade of some one dear to him—here, amidst a wealth of theatrical engravings, relics, and souvenirs, one of the last being a meerschaum pipe given to him by the Prince of Wales, one of the most original and humorous comedians of the English stage may be found. Mr. Lionel Brough, now in his sixtieth year, has a very interesting autobiography to narrate. He is a son of a dramatic author, Barnabas Brough, and a younger brother of Robert and William Brough, who followed in their father's footsteps. After a good education, he found employment in the office of the *Illustrated London News*, then under the editorship of John Timbs. Here he became acquainted with Dickens, Thackeray, Jerrold, Leech, John Gilbert, and Albert Smith. Subsequently, as assistant-publisher of the *Daily Telegraph*, he materially helped that journal in its early days by organizing a staff of over two hundred boys to sell it in the streets. He next associated himself with the *Morning Star*. His first appearance as an actor was at the Lyceum, then under the management of Madame Vestris and Charles Mathews, in *Prince Petty Pet*—one of William Brough's extravaganzas—and *My Fellow Clerk*. For some time he oscillated between journalism and the stage, eventually, however, giving his preference to the latter. His first engagement of importance in London was at the Queen's Theatre in 1868, when he appeared, with Mr. Toole and Mr. Irving, as Ben Garner in Byron's *Dearer than Life*. From that moment his career has been one of almost uninterrupted success, whether in comedy, farce, or burlesque. To enumerate what he has done would be impossible within our present limits. It must be enough to say that he is a comedian in the highest sense of the word, and that no one could ever have played Bob Acres and Tony Lumpkin with finer or richer effect. Entering the theatrical profession at an early age, his son, Mr. Sydney Brough, has already distinguished himself in a variety of parts, particularly as Wilfred Brudenell in *The Profligate*, Trevillac in *La Tosca*, Dick in *A Pair of Spectacles*, and Sir Thomas Dovergreen in *The Rogue's Comedy*. That he will rise to a high place there can be no doubt.

B

At the Play.

IN LONDON.

THE near approach of the end of the season has brought about a general closing of theatres. It would appear, moreover, that the period of rest this year is to be somewhat longer than usual, since the Adelphi, which customarily sounds the first note of the autumn season, is not to re-open until September, when a new drama, called *Boys Together*, by Messrs. Haddon Chambers and J. Comyns Carr, will be presented.

THE COUNTESS GUCKI.

A Comedy, in Three Acts, adapted from the original of FRANZ VON SCHONTHAN, by AUGUSTIN DALY Produced at the Comedy Theatre, July 11.

Count Von Counsellor Mittersteig ..	Mr. JAMES LEWIS.	Baumann	Mr. WILLIAM HASELTINE.
Clementina	Mrs. G. H. GILBERT.	Wensel	Mr. ROBERT SHEPHARD.
Lilli	Miss HELMA NELSON.	Rosa	Miss MABELLE GILLMAN.
General Suvatscheff	Mr. EDWIN STEVENS.	The Countess Hermance Trachau (Countess Gucki)	Miss ADA REHAN.
Bruno Von Nuehoff	Mr. CHARLES RICHMAN.		
Cousin Leopold ..	Mr. SIDNEY HERBERT.		

There is little to differentiate *The Countess Gucki* from any of the numerous German comedies which Mr. Augustin Daly is wont to present in English dress for the delectation of his patrons. In works of the kind one only expects to find, of course, a somewhat slender plot of a rather primitive description, while an intrigue of strict simplicity is the chief characteristic. *The Countess Gucki* conforms with striking exactitude to these conditions. But there remains one further requirement — the most important, indeed, of all. To every playgoer will at once occur the question, does the new piece contain a suitable part for Miss Ada Rehan, designed to afford her sufficient scope for the display of her wonderful abilities? In the present instance, happily, an affirmative answer may be given, although with certain reservations. To have witnessed Miss Rehan's Katharine or Viola is in a measure to be spoiled for anything in the nature of an inferior performance. Just, however, as Herr Von Schonthan is not Shakspere, so it is hardly to be expected that his creations should stand on the same level as those of our

great national poet. It is enough that, in the Countess Gucki, he has presented a sketch of an exceedingly bright, clever, and vivacious woman, who throughout the piece never loses her hold upon the sympathies of the spectator. Of novelty either of subject or treatment there is little trace in the piece. It is the old story of Beatrice and Benedick over again—the subjugation of a dashing, masterful man by a witty and resourceful woman. The author lays the scene of his play in Carlsbad in the year 1819, and so contrives to secure some quaint effects in the matter of costume and headgear. Allusions also to celebrities of the time, such as Goethe, Prince Metternich, and Napoleon abound, although, conveyed as they are in current Americanisms, these are not without a touch of incongruity. When all, however, is said, the salient fact remains that, as the Countess Gucki, who meets, falls in love with, and finally captivates the handsome young Bruno Von Nuehoff, Miss Rehan is seen at her best—the epitome, that is to say, of all that is most charming, fascinating, and delightful in woman. Mr. Charles Richman, who now occupies the place formerly filled by Mr. John Drew, is a promising young actor. He is not yet quite a master of *finesse*, nor has he acquired that lightness of touch and ready sense of witty expression which so distinguished his predecessor. But time and experience may still serve to bring him those qualities. Mr. Edwin Stevens gave a careful portrait of the kindly martinet, General Suvatscheff, and Mr. James Lewis an extremely humorous sketch of Counsellor Mittersteig. The remaining members of the company hardly call for individual mention.

When Greek Meets Greek.

A Romantic Drama, in Four Acts, by Joseph Hatton. Produced at the Surrey Theatre, June 29.

Grébauval	Mr. Murray Carson.	Laroche — Agent of Police	Mr. C. J. Carlile.
Count de Fournier ..	Mr. Murray Carson.	Duchesse de Louvet	Miss Louise Moodie.
Robespierre	Mr. T. W. Percyval.	Marie—Daughter of Laroche	Miss Bessie Hatton.
Pierre Grappin—of the Lion d'Or ..	Mr. A. E. George.	Madame Grappin ..	Miss Eleanor Stirling
Jaffray Ellicott ..	Mr. Loring Fernie.	Mathilde de Louvet..	Miss Essex Dane.
Duke de Louvet ..	Mr. T. P. Williamson.		

Although the Surrey scarcely comes within the purview of the chronicler of west-end theatres, the reputation of Mr. Joseph Hatton as novelist and playwright provides sufficient excuse for referring here to the first London performance of his romantic drama, *When Greek Meets Greek*. The piece is adapted from his novel bearing the same name, and, if in places a trifle verbose and unwieldy, presents a thrilling story set forth with considerable skill. Mr. Hatton has chosen for his play the

period of the French Revolution, and thereby secured a striking framework for his picture. It is, however, the love-duel waged between the half-brothers, Henri de Fournier, a noted Royalist, and Grébauval, the people's deputy, that provides the basis of the stirring plot. Both men worship pretty Mathilde de Louvet, and each, after his own fashion, leaves no stone unturned in order to win her. The final victory rests with De Fournier, who in fair fight kills his unscrupulous and treacherous opponent, and whose only chance of safety thereafter lies in his assuming the clothes and manner of the individual he so closely resembles. The trick succeeds, even to the point of deceiving so shrewd a person as Robespierre. The author has so contrived that the parts of the two brothers can be played by the same actor. In essaying the task Mr. Murray Carson proved singularly successful, his portrait of the handsome, buoyant, and light-hearted De Fournier being no less remarkable than his impersonation of the moody, stern, and resentful Grebauval. Miss Essex Dane gave a really powerful picture of the greatly persecuted heroine; Miss Bessie Hatton, a bright and pleasing sketch of Marie; Mr. T. W. Percyval, a carefully finished study of Robespierre; and Mr. T. P. Williamson, a clever and effective performance as the Duke de Louvet. Wholly admirable, also, was the Duchesse de Louvet of Miss Louise Moodie.

My Girl.

A Domestic Musical Play, in Two Acts, by James T. Tanner. Music by F. Osmond Carr. Lyrics by Adrian Ross. Produced at the Gaiety Theatre, July 13.

The Rev. Arthur Mildreth	Mr. Charles Ryley.	Lady Bargrave ..	Miss Maria Davis.
Theo	Mr. Paul Arthur.	Beattix	Miss Ethel Haydon.
Alexander McGregor	Mr. John Le Hay.	Rebecca	Miss Marie Montrose.
Dr. Tertius Huxtable	Mr. Fred Kaye.	Phœbe Toodge ..	Miss Katie Seymour.
Lord Barum	Mr. Lawrance D'Orsay.	Melissa Banks ..	Miss Ethel Sydney.
Leopold Von Fontein	Mr. W. H. Rawlins.	Mayoress	Miss Connie Ediss.
Saunders	Mr. Leslie Holland.	Dorothy	Miss Kate Adams.
Weeks	Mr. Willie Warde.	Mary	Miss Ada Maitland.
The Mayor of Porthampton	Mr. Colin Coop.	Miss Veriner ..	Miss Florence Lloyd.
John Fahee	Mr. W. Downes.	Mrs. Porkinson ..	Miss Grace Palotta.
		May	Miss Ellaline Terriss.

Mr. George Edwardes's latest production is a curious mixture of music, melodrama, sentiment, and farce. It also treats largely of Stock Exchange quotations, South African gold mines, and Jew financiers. The references are not always in the best taste, nor is the dialogue particularly witty. But that, by virtue of pretty costumes, nimble dancing, and pleasing singing, the piece will ultimately grow into a success there is little doubt. Honestly, we are unable to declare that for this result the author, Mr. J. T. Tanner, can in any large measure be held responsible. His work is slipshod and uneven, and seldom reaches a higher

level than that of the commonplace. Mr. Adrian Ross, on the other hand, has provided lyrics of excellent quality, while Dr. Osmond Carr's music is agreeably fluent and graceful. In the first act the author develops a story that promises to be almost tragic, but in the second his purpose seems to fail him, and he reverts more or less to the familiar system of furnishing a variety entertainment. The Rev. Arthur Mildreth is a clergyman not averse to turning an honest penny on the Stock Exchange. He has, moreover, invested largely in a Scotch bank, which comes to grief and threatens to involve him in its ruin. Meanwhile, his son, Theo, has contracted debts he has no means of paying. May, his daughter, is induced, however, to buy £800 worth of shares in a mine called the Mayblossom, supposed to be worthless. Eventually it turns out a huge success, and the guileless young speculator finds herself the fortunate possessor of £30,000, with which she proceeds to make everybody happy. There is the usual love interest in the piece, while the doings of a couple of rascally promoters, Leopold Von Fontein and Samuel Moses, the latter masquerading as a Scotchman, provide ample food for laughter—and wonder. Moses, as represented by Mr. John Le Hay, is, notwithstanding, an exceedingly amusing and grotesque figure, and stands a head and shoulders above all the other characters. This is not to say, however, that the remainder are not adequately sustained.

On the March.

A Musical Comedy, in Two Acts, by William Yardley, B. C. Stephenson, and Cecil Clay. Music by John Crook, Edward Solomon, and Frederic Clay. Produced at the Prince of Wales's Theatre, June 22.

Fitzallerton Scroggs .. Mr. Thomas E. Murray.	Captain King .. .. Mr. A. Wilson.
Colonel M'Alister .. Mr. Cecil Ramsey.	Edith de Bang.. .. Miss Maud Boyd.
Captain Felix M'Alister Mr. Templar Saxe.	Florence Pringle .. Miss Frances Earle.
Lieutenant Jack Ferris Mr. C. H. E. Brookfield.	Elfrida, Mrs. Molyneaux Miss Augusta Walters.
Sergeant Struggles .. Mr. Horace Mills.	Maggie Welland .. Miss Alice Atherton.
Corporal Rush.. .. Mr. Cecil Freare.	

That the combined efforts of six ingenious gentlemen should produce nothing more inspiriting or novel than *On the March* goes far to undermine one's faith in the truth of the axiom that unity is strength. Belief in the accuracy of the proverb is, however, once more inspired by the reflection that it is the exception that proves the rule. *On the March* is evidently the exception. It is a "go-as-you-please" kind of piece, possessing no greater consistency than an unboiled egg. Imagine a party of officers and their friends anxious to indulge their taste for private theatricals—push the hypothesis a little further, and conceive

them behind the scenes of a theatre carrying on a rehearsal amid the bickerings and jealousies common to most amateur performances. Within these limits you have the plot of *On the March*, of which the humour is not to be compared for a moment with that found in *A Pantomime Rehearsal*. Mr. Thomas E. Murray, who plays the part of a theatrical manager, is a comedian fashioned upon American lines. Occasionally his business is amusing, but his method smacks altogether too strongly of the music hall to be quite welcome on the stage of a theatre. Mr. Cecil Ramsey and Mr. Horace Mills proved that they can be funny on occasion, while Mr. Brookfield and Miss Alice Atherton made the artistic successes of the evening. The music supplied by the three composers possesses, at any rate, the commendable quality of "variety."

The Little Genius.

A Comic Opera, in Two Acts, by Sir Augustus Harris and Arthur Sturgess. Music by Eugen Von Taund. Additional numbers by J. M. Glover and Landon Ronald. Produced at the Shaftesbury Theatre, July 9.

Lord Lomond	Mr. C. P. Little.	Arabella	Miss Kate Phillips.
The Chevalier Tween	Mr. E. J. Lonnen.	Lady Plantagenet ..	Miss Birdie Sutherland.
Signor Gordoni ..	Mr. Arthur Williams.	The Hon. Miss Edith Byng	Miss Edith Johnston.
Mr. Knox	Mr. W. Cheesman.		
Edward, Lord Calmore	Mr. Harrison Brockbank.	Miss Mount Gore ..	Miss Lillian Menelly.
Lord Jermyn	Mr. Cecil Lawrence.	Lady Mabel Clare ..	Miss Nell Gwynne.
Bathing Machine Man	Mr. A. T. Hendon.	Miss Sackville ..	Miss Maurice.
Miss Georgie Knox ..	Miss Maggie Roberts.	Paolo	Miss Annie Dirkens.

A profound disappointment awaited those who, relying upon the belief expressed by the late Sir Augustus Harris that *The Little Genius* would prove an emphatic success, looked forward to its production with the liveliest expectation. That the lamented death of the former lessee of Drury Lane prevented him from giving the finishing touches to the piece may be acknowledged, but unfortunately the public and the critics can only judge of an opera in the form presented. In that shape *The Little Genius* must be pronounced woefully wanting. Badly constructed, irrelevant, and lacking in humour, it leaves one in a condition of puzzledom as to how it contrived to win for itself so favourable a reputation on the Continent. Nor is there much to be said for Herr Von Taund's music, which has neither originality, freshness, nor ingenuity to recommend it. All this is the more to be regretted, inasmuch as the plot contains a germ of interest that, properly developed, might have served to furnish forth a satisfactory libretto. A few lines will suffice to indicate the scope of the story. Paolo, daughter of Lord Lomond, has in early youth been confided to the care of Gordoni, an unscrupulous impresario, who, to forward his own interests, dresses the girl in boy's clothes, and presents her to the musical public

as a prodigy. Young Lord Calmore discovers the secret, and, abandoning his own *fiancée*, Georgie Knox, demands the hand of his new love, while Georgie, nothing loth, transfers her affections to the Chevalier Tween, an eccentric composer, who acts as Paolo's accompanist. At the last moment Lord Lomond makes his appearance, claims his daughter, and endows her with sufficient wealth to render her and Lord Calmore independent. Such, briefly, is the plot, obviously of so thin a character as to be valueless were it not for the interpolated scenes. Even these, however, are not amusing enough to save the piece from disaster. Miss Annie Dirkens, as the Little Genius, sang and acted with great charm, but the part is unhappily of no great importance. To Mr. E. J. Lonnen fell the success of the evening, his performance, although outrageously extravagant, being undeniably funny. Upon the efforts of the rest of the company there is no need to comment.

Major Raymond.

A Play, in Four Acts, by Philip Havard. Produced at Terry's Theatre, June 25.

Major Raymond ..	Mr. W. L. Abingdon.	Molly Dyson ..	Miss Eva Moore.
Mr. Dyson	Mr. Frederick Volpe.	Lady Dorothea Gunthorpe ..	Miss Madge Ray.
Sir John Beale ..	Mr. Julian Cross.	Mrs. Graham ..	Miss Nora Carewe.
Michael Kennedy	Mr. G. Hippisley.	Tomkins	Miss Anice Chippendale.
Oliver Fleming ..	Mr. Oswald Yorke.	Mrs. Rubenstein..	Miss Davies Webster.
Bernard, Viscount Ashbrook ..	Mr. C. M. Lowne.	Rachael Rubenstein	Miss Lena Cross.
Frewin	Mr. Guy Waller.	Maud Graham ..	Miss Beatrice Baily.
Isaac Rubenstein	Mr. Sydney Burt.	Mrs. Fleming ..	Miss Mary Raby.
Binks	Mr. S. Fortescue Harrison.		

Major Raymond is a play of one situation and many digressions. Let us first deal with the former. Thirty years previous to the opening of the piece Major Raymond had deserted his wife, not knowing that she was shortly to become a mother. Returning to London after a long interval he meets his son, without, of course, having any suspicion of their relationship. From the lad he wins £500 at cards, which the former, in order to pay the debt, purloins from his employer's safe. Chance brings all concerned beneath the same roof, when the Major, still unconscious of the truth, undertakes to expose the thief. As he is on the point of naming the culprit, he learns that by doing so he will ruin his own son, to save whom he hastens to declare that he himself is the guilty man. The situation obviously has elements of power, but so little skill does the author reveal in leading up to and developing it that its effect goes for little. The play, otherwise, shows much too clearly the presence of the 'prentice hand to be of any real value. It contains, nevertheless, sufficient promise to warrant the expectation that Mr. Havard will be heard of again. With the exception of Miss Eva Moore's exceedingly

bright and lively performance as Molly Dyson, Mr. W. L. Abingdon's clever, although slightly conventional, rendering of the title part, and Mr. Oswald Yorke's really striking portrait of the wretched, cringing, and contemptible son, the acting is best dismissed without comment.

The Mummy.

A Farce, in Three Acts, by George D. Day and Allan Reed. Produced at the Comedy Theatre, July 2.

Rameses	Mr. Lionel Brough.	Alvena Garsop ..	Miss Alice Mansfield.
Professor Jeremy Garsop	Mr. W. Cheesman.	Eva Garsop ..	Miss Lilly Johnson.
Ezra Van Tassel Smythe	Mr. Robb Harwood.	Mabel Woodruff	Miss Jessie Bateman.
Jack Tibbs	Mr. Stuart Champion.	Cleopatra	Miss Annie Goward.
North Marston ..	Mr. Clarence Blakiston.	Hattie Van Tassel Smythe ..	Miss Charlotte G. Walker.

The Mummy would certainly have had a better chance of existence had it not been preceded by Mr. Gilbert's *Pygmalion and Galatea* and the Messrs. Paulton's *Niobe*. Both these pieces cover pretty much the same ground as Messrs. Day and Reed's farce, and, it has to be admitted, to greater advantage. When an embalmed fragment of humanity, after slumbering for two thousand years, awakes to consciousness, it is tolerably safe to predict what will happen. The present authors have made fair use of their opportunities, yet one cannot but feel that their piece is lacking in fibre, and that the fun of the situations has been worn a trifle threadbare. It is unnecessary to go into the particulars of a plot that presents no very marked feature of novelty. Mr. Lionel Brough, in his drily humorous fashion, proved amusing as the resuscitated Rameses, and Miss Annie Goward made a very decided hit as a coloured maid-of-all-work.

The Honourable Member.

A Comedy-Drama, in Three Acts, by A. W. Gattie. Produced at the Court Theatre, July 14.

Samuel Ditherby, M.P.	Mr. G. W. Anson.	Davies	Mr. Thos. Courtice.
Luke Heron	Mr. W. Scott Buist.	Mrs. Ditherby ..	Mrs. Edmund Phelps.
James Hubbock ..	Mr. George Bernage.	Mrs. Hubbock ..	Mrs. A. R. McIntosh.
Beamer	Mr. James Welch.	Margery Douglas ..	Miss Madge McIntosh.
Williams	Mr. Graham Browne.		

Mr. A. W. Gattie has rather an irritating trick of announcing himself to all and sundry and on every occasion as the author of *The Transgressor*, a piece produced a year ago by Miss Olga Nethersole. *The Transgressor*, we are willing to acknowledge, was doubtless written with an earnest purpose in view. But, judged purely as a dramatic work, it failed to satisfy in almost every respect. Why, therefore, its memory should be evoked so persistently we are at a loss to understand. Now, however, Mr.

Gattie is in a position to alter the formula, and to speak of himself as the author of *The Honourable Member*, either in conjunction with or apart from his previous essay. That the circumstance is calculated to advance his reputation we are not prepared to say. *The Honourable Member* has much in common with its predecessor from the same pen. It is an ambitious, inflated, well-intentioned, and, although only in three acts, prodigiously tedious play. Mr. Gattie has conceived a well-worn and purely melodramatic story, which he uses as a medium for airing his views regarding society, politics, Stock Exchange gambling, the ethics of speculation, and other profound matters. Unfortunately, it can hardly be said that he has anything of a particularly novel character to reveal touching any of these problems, the result being, so far as his audience is concerned, rather a feeling of boredom than of interest. Nevertheless the piece is not without cleverness of a certain ponderous order—the cleverness of the debating platform, however, and not of the stage. The story deals with the theft by a miserable, overworked secretary of a diamond necklet from a Mrs. Ditherby, wife of a vulgar, commonplace M.P. A Miss Margery Douglas, staying as a guest in the house, is accused, for no very adequate reason, of having purloined the jewelry, but conscience is thereby awakened in the secretary's breast, and he confesses to the commission of the crime. Another thread of the plot is concerned with the love of Luke Heron, editor of a paper run by Mr. Ditherby, for Margery Douglas, who, being, as it turns out, a married woman, is forced to reject his proposals, even when they take the form of a suggested elopement to America. Happily, Margery's husband is so complaisant as to die just at the moment required by the dramatist, thus permitting the union of the loving pair in a legitimate way. Mr. James Welch's impersonation of Beamer, the down-trodden secretary, was an exceedingly fine piece of acting, while Miss Madge McIntosh as Margery gave abundant proof that she is an intelligent, powerful, and graceful actress. The remaining characters were in thoroughly competent hands.

Her Father's Friend.

A Romantic Play, in Three Acts, by the late H. A. Rudall. Produced at the Savoy Theatre, June 29.

Marquis de Tournac	Mr. G. W. Cockburn.	Camille	Mr. Clarence Fitzclarence.
Dermont	Mr. Sydney Paxton.	1st Soldier ..	Mr. Albert E. Raynor.
Maurice	Mr. Harrison Hunter.	2nd Soldier ..	Mr. William Burchill.
Père Jerome.. ..	Mr. H. A. Saintsbury.	3rd Soldier ..	Mr. Ferdinand Conti.
"Tiger" Jacques ..	Mr. Chas. Dodsworth.	Rosette	Miss Kate Turner.
General Hansberger	Mr. George Riddell.	Aline	Miss Italia Conti.

Her Father's Friend was written fifteen years ago with the object of suiting the late John Clayton, for whom the principal

part was specially designed. Even at that time it may be doubted whether the piece would have achieved any success. To-day it is hopelessly out of date. The story treats of an act of self-sacrifice by a good-hearted but pleasure-loving marquis, who, to secure his daughter's happiness, takes upon himself the responsibilities of a crime committed by her lover and bravely accepts death as the reward of his devotion. The piece is cumbersome and long-winded, although here and there a pretty vein of tenderness may be discerned. Mr. G. W. Cockburn furnished a fine, manly portrait of the marquis, but Miss Italia Conti, the promoter of the *matinée*, showed that she has neither the experience nor the skill to give a satisfactory account of the part of Aline, his daughter.

Behind the Scenes.

A Farcical Comedy, in Three Acts, adapted from *The First Night*, by Felix Morris and George P. Hawtrey. Produced at the Comedy Theatre, July 4.

Achille Talma Dufard	Mr. Felix Morris.	Mr. Bucalossi ..	Mr. E. Bucalossi.
Ferdinand Schrieber	Mr. W. F. Hawtrey.	Jeffreys	Mr. C. King.
Jack Cardew ..	Mr. Cosmo Stuart.	Tommy	Mr. R. Earle.
Alexander Hugget	Mr. Ernest Cosham.	Miss Pettigrew ..	Miss Alice Beet.
John Duncan ..	Mr. Fred Volpe.	Miss Hamilton ..	Miss Gertrude Henriquez.
Mr. Wilson	Mr. Harry Ford.	Miss Dufard	Miss Sarah Brooke.
Mr. Vaughan ..	Mr. William Aysom.	Maud Beresford ..	Miss Alma Stanley.
Mr. Bennett	Mr. Frank Lacy.		

Little more than a bare record of the production of *Behind the Scenes* is required. It is an adaptation of the French play *Le Père de la Débutante*, already done into English under the title of *The First Night*. Why it should have been deemed necessary to present a new and a vastly inferior version of the original piece Messrs. Morris and Hawtrey alone know. The secret is safe with them, as no one is likely to press for a solution of the mystery. There is, in truth, small probability that the curtain will ever rise again upon *Behind the Scenes*, and as the performance offered no feature of particular interest the subject may be dismissed without regret or further remark.

The Opera.

As might have been expected after the sudden removal of the lamented impresario from his operatic sphere of labour, the concluding weeks of the Covent Garden season were comparatively uneventful, and beyond the production of *Tristan and Isolde* in German (with M. Jean de Reszke and Madame Albani) and the revival of *Manon* in French (with M. Alvarez and Madame

Melba) there is nothing of material importance to record. *Tristan* has never been so beautifully sung in this country, but while we recognise the genius of the Polish tenor and the ineffable charm of his voice and delivery in the great love duet of the second act, it would be unfair to omit mention of his brother's superb rendering of the music of King Marke—another feature of a remarkable performance that practically amounted to a revelation. It was in this work that the two gifted artists bade their public farewell for the present on the 14th ult. The *Manon* revival was chiefly noteworthy for the first appearance of Madame Melba here in the title-part, which she acted with unsuspected force, whilst executing the florid music of the part in her most brilliant and dazzling fashion.

IN THE PROVINCES.

IN our last issue we left Sir Henry Irving at Edinburgh, where he found large and appreciative audiences throughout his stay. Almost as a matter of course, this engagement was followed by one at Glasgow, begun on June 22nd with the *Merchant of Venice*. "It is more than a year," says the *Glasgow Herald*, "since we had a visit from the Lyceum company and the distinguished actor at its head. A good many things have happened in twelve months. For one thing, Henry Irving has received the honour of knighthood at the hands of the Queen, and since last he met his Glasgow friends and admirers he has travelled with Miss Terry and his other colleagues over a goodly part of the continent of America. The New World, as we know from contemporary record, appreciates to the full the artistic completeness of the Lyceum combination, and appreciation of this kind is more than aught else valued by those who think of art first, and its personal—or shall we say its pecuniary?—results afterwards. We account Shylock one of Sir Henry Irving's finest parts—finest because it is conceived on the highest lines, and is a complex yet thoroughly consistent interpretation. Time was when Shylock was regarded as a mere lender of money, who had not a soul above his ducats. Sir Henry Irving by no means sinks this side of the character, yet he lifts it through the racial antipathies and sympathies of the Jew into the higher air of nationalism, if one may employ a nineteenth century phrase without anachronism. Often as we have been impressed by Irving's Shylock, it seemed to us that his impersonation last night was more than ever marked by skilful play of eye, of voice, of gesture—by the regulated, carefully-graduated, expression of scorn, of hatred, of pitiless cruelty, of

almost voiceless pathos. What shall we say of Miss Ellen Terry's Portia save that it was graceful and poetical to a degree?" Said the *North British Daily Mail*:—"A greeting of special heartiness to visitors so distinguished—our theatrical dead season notwithstanding—was to be expected, and the heartiness certainly was forthcoming in abundance. The theatre was filled in every part, several recalls were insisted upon after every act, and at the fall of the curtain, amid a storm of applause, there were the inevitable demands for a speech, without which no provincial audience seems now to regard its entertainment at the hands of an eminent actor as complete." The *Mail* adopted a critical tone, but acknowledged the "real greatness of the conception." "There is admittedly," the *Evening News* said, "no character of Shakspere's in which the commanding genius of Irving has more manifested itself than in that of Shylock." On the following night, before another full audience, came *Nance Oldfield* and *The Bells*. The *Herald*, after endorsing a remark that Miss Terry's acting in the former was always new music to the ear, speaks of Sir Henry Irving's Mathias as a profoundly subtle psychological study of the character—"a man of sorrows of his own creation, who carries with him through each succeeding year of his life a lengthening chain of remorse and apprehension." The *Mail* seemed to regret that another Shaksperean piece had not been given in place of *The Bells*. "We suppose," it said, "that no visit from Sir Henry Irving would be quite complete in the popular estimation without a performance of *The Bells*. It is almost the first piece in which he made his mark, and his name has ever since remained so closely identified with the weird tragedy that the part of Mathias may be said to have become a personal monopoly. Needless to say, this association of the actor and the play in the public mind is not wholly fortunate. It would be a pity indeed had Sir Henry Irving never attained to any loftier creation in his art than the realistic portrayal of the terrors endured by this conscience-stricken and fear-oppressed murderer, a portrayal calling for the exercise of much physical endurance, and evoking the play of a lively imagination, no doubt, but yet hardly in any sense to be classed with the highest efforts of the actor's art. Popularity, however, has set its seal upon the piece, and it must readily be granted that Sir Henry Irving makes the most of its possibilities." Opinion was rather divided as to the merits of *King Arthur* as a play, but all the critics were agreed as to the beauty of the acting, the scenery, and the general effect. "As befitted the occasion," the *Mail* wrote, "there was a splendid house, not a seat being vacant in the theatre from boxes to gallery. This play, it may be remembered, was produced at the

Lyceum eighteen months ago, in January, 1895, and the run it enjoyed, holding the stage continuously till the following May, and intermittently for some time afterwards, showed that on one ground or another it had won a place for itself in public favour. What that ground was and is—for its reception last night, without being madly enthusiastic, emphatically endorsed the general verdict—must be sought less in the play itself than in the accessories of its production, and especially in that paramount accessory, the stage sponsorship of Sir Henry Irving. Almost any work produced at the Lyceum, if endurable at all, is assured of a certain measure of success. The artistic perfection of past achievements on its stage is accepted as a guarantee that future plays deemed worthy of the lavish mounting Sir Henry loves to indulge in must at least be worth seeing. The confidence is not misplaced, and it is certainly more than justified in the case of *King Arthur*." The *Daily Record* described the play as "tasting of a nectar, sweet in its every sip; full of the poetical, the idyllic grace that one must always associate with Arthurian legend."

Newcastle was the next city to be visited by the company, who appeared at the Tyne Theatre on the 29th of June in the *Merchant of Venice*. Nearly forty years ago, the *Daily Journal* noted, "the head of the Lyceum Theatre, and, it may be said without approach to exaggeration, the leading figure of the English stage in the Victorian era, made his first regular appearance on the boards at Sunderland; and for many a long year he trod the rough and thorny path that leads to distinction in an art that has in proportion to its rewards, probably a greater number of disappointments than any other calling. His brilliant career at the Lyceum Theatre witnesses to what, over so extended a period, may not unfairly be regarded as the palmiest days of the stage. The productions under his management have been characterised in almost every case, and in increasing degree, by artistic taste, so that it is clear if Irving had never acted himself he could as a manager have done a great work for the theatre in this country. Shakspere's plays have been mounted and interpreted at the Lyceum with a thoroughness that we may never see equalled, and need not hope to see surpassed. Endowed with something of fine literary judgment, he has imparted to his fellow-workers a love for the great works of the English stage, and with the eye of the artist he has given us pictures of life in various parts of Europe that for perfectness of conception, and harmony of colour, and grouping, when once beheld, are not to be forgotten. Sir Henry Irving has had a most valuable second in Miss Ellen Terry, who throughout her comings and goings on the stage has for so many years held her position as the leading English actress of the day."

The *Daily Chronicle* held Shylock to be the "very best" of Sir Henry Irving's interpretations. *King Arthur* was represented on the following night to a crammed house. Here, again, the critics were not at one as to the play, but best owed warm praise on the acting and the pictorial effects obtained. *Nance Oldfield* and *The Bells* wound up a remarkably successful visit, the Mathias being adjudged greater than at any previous time. "Never," said the *Chronicle*, "has a theatre in Newcastle been so well filled as the Tyne theatre has been during the last three nights; and that Sir Henry Irving should have been able to draw from far and near so many people to hear him is a magnificent tribute to the fame he so deservedly enjoys."

Remunerative throughout, the tour came to an end with a three nights' engagement at Leeds at the beginning of July, the first play given being *The Merchant of Venice*. On all sides there were complaints that the company had not pitched their tents there for a longer period. Even at the increased prices every part of the theatre was filled. "Henry Irving," the *Yorkshire Post* remarked, "is something more than actor; he is an artist in the widest sense of the word, and he is a scholar who reads Shakspere with the appreciation of a student as well as with the eyes of a stage manager. His Shylock is a marvellous conception, in some respects probably the most perfect portrayal of the part ever seen. But Shylock, after all, is only one figure in the picture—by far the most important figure, it is true, but still only one; and no one knows this better than the Lyceum manager, who has elevated the whole surroundings of the Jew to the same level of excellence that characterises his own impersonation. Shylock is one of Irving's most perfect characters. All through it is evident that his overpowering jealousy for his despised nation is the dominant note in the nature that has been hardened by long oppression." "The crowded house," said the *Leeds Mercury*, "was worthy of the splendid performance. Both Sir Henry and Miss Ellen Terry received their due homage in the matter of rapt attention and rapturous applause, and throughout the evening no doubt clouded the serene consciousness of the audience that they were witnessing as fine a performance of a great Shaksperean play as the age is capable of presenting. At this time of day any fresh eulogy of Sir Henry Irving's impersonation of Shylock would seem unnecessary; but it is inevitable, because, as the years pass, the strength of the actor, intellectually and physically, seems to increase, with the result that a riper, subtler, and more delicate exposition of his art is to be seen to-day than at any previous period in his career. To Miss Ellen Terry an equal compliment can be paid. Venice, tinted with the rich hues of the Middle

Ages, appears again in the successive scenes of this fine production; and its human movement, as well as its external colour, is suggested by those gratuitous luxuries in the form of stage crowds, perfectly trained, and composed of actors and actresses, altogether removed above the level of mere 'supers,' which have made the Lyceum a model for all stages elsewhere to copy. Through it all stalks the picturesque figure of Shylock, burning with a sense of wrong, keen for justice according to his own vindictive lights, with hardly a human heart beating in sympathy with his, but majestic and impressive even in his solitude. It is possible to feel intense sympathy with the old usurer, because of the insistence of the actor on the human attributes of the man—on that undertone of pathos that sounds all through the impersonation." *King Arthur* was played the next night with what the *Leeds Mercury* records as great success. "Few will deny," the *Critic* says, "that the production, as a whole, is one that could only emanate from our premier British theatre. Sir Henry Irving's bearing imparts to the character a dignity that owes a mystical, melancholy grace that commands respect and sympathy. His great opportunity was in the third act, when Mordred opens his eyes to the infidelity of his Queen. It was the scene of Iago and Othello over again; but it was a noble grief, and not the jealous rage of a wild beast, that made the breast of the wronged man heave with emotion. Miss Ellen Terry's distinction and charm were worthy of our premier English actress. From the rise to the fall of the curtain the proscenium was a gilt frame for a series of pictures nobly planned; and one especially, the whitethorn wood, by Hawes Craven, with the setting sun glowing in the distance behind the closely serried ranks of tree-trunks, like a fire through a grating, was one of the finest sylvan scenes ever placed upon the stage."

IN PARIS.

The novelty season came to an end with Ibsen's *Soutiens de la Société*, given as the last spectacle of this year's series by the Théâtre de l'Œuvre. Though this is not one of Ibsen's earlier pieces (it came out in 1877, only two years before the *Doll's House*), it is constructed after the old models, with a general clearing-up and setting-right at the end. This, M. Lugné-Poë appears to have thought, would never go down with his Ibsen enthusiasts; so in his adaptation the Indian girl is not known to have been stopped, but is supposed to have gone on her voyage

to an almost certain shipwreck, with the wicked but repentent Consul's boy aboard. Ibsen had his object in not letting the ship start, and the Consul's impulse to confess his sins to the public rests in the original and the adaptation upon different bases. The rendering of a philosophical dramatist like Ibsen should surely be as close to the original as is materially possible. The alteration puts the Consul's confession in quite a different key.

The Comédie Française has revived *Tartuffe* and *Il ne faut jurer de rien*, with M. Worms in the title-part of the former, and M. Truffier as the abbé in the latter. M. Worms would, of course, interpret the part as he felt himself best qualified to do, but his is not the popular Tartuffe—a more or less comical broad hypocrite, well-fed and high-coloured. M. Worms is a subtle, ambitious Tartuffe, with vigorous passions held under, a bad, dangerous hypocrite. Molière meant the first :—

> Orgon : Et Tartuffe ?
> Dorine : Tartuffe ? Il se porte à merveille ;
> Gros et gras et la bouche vermeille.
> . . . . fort dévotement il mangea deux perdrix,
> Avec une moitié de gigot en hachis, &c.

It is the virtue of Molière that his big canvas leaves scope for variety of detail, and so M. Worms works out other traits in the character than those which many of his predecessors have endeavoured to bring into the foreground.

Everyone knows how M. Got gave the abbé in *Il ne faut jurer de rien* a weight in the piece which the author did not intend, and how Alfred de Musset acquiesced in this discovery of the capabilities of the character. M. Got's priest was a latter-day, good-natured, awkward country ecclesiastic, lending himself only half consciously to the caprices of the *grande dame*. Musset simply painted one of those more or less insignificant abbés who attended the great ladies of the eighteenth century. M. Truffier has preferred to follow the now hallowed lines of M. Got, and the public probably expects the part to be played not otherwise.

IN BERLIN.

The past season in Berlin has not been remarkable for any novel or epoch-making events in the history of the German stage. Indeed, with the exception of the Berliner and Schiller Theatres, which have both been most industrious in mounting good pieces, it cannot be said that the theatres of the capital have maintained the reputation of Berlin as the first city in the German-speaking world in all that relates to the drama. The Berliner Theatre, in

particular, has given performances of many pieces of Goethe, Schiller, Anzengruber, and Wildenbruch. Neither house, however, has ventured to produce new plays of a serious order, and as their companies are only second-rate, the sum of their artistic results is less than that of their popular success. The Lessing Theatre has brought out Sudermann's last play, and a clever French and a witty Italian novelty—*Die Romantischen* and *Untreu*. For realism, one must go to the Deutsches Theatre, where such works as *Die Mutter* and *Liebelei* have been performed in a masterly way, and the comedies of Frau Rosmer and Halbe have been rendered with quite delightful art. In the representation of works in the grand style there is an undeniable backsliding at the Deutsches. Frau Sorma cannot play every part, and a heroine is entirely wanting to the boards. Yet *Richard III.* and Molière's *Misanthrope* were tolerably successful, thanks to the talent of Kainz. The Deutsches Theatre will take the first position in Berlin if the Königliches Theatre persistently shirks its responsibilities as the leading house. The latter has an excellent company, but is deficient in enterprise. It began the last season with good performances of plays by Grillparzer and Shakspere, but it has done practically nothing else.

At the New Opera House Goldmark's *Das Heimchen am Herd* (*The Cricket on the Hearth*), which, on its first appearance in Vienna, was noticed in the pages of *The Theatre*, has been most cordially received. Since the last great triumph of the young Italians, since Mascagni's *Rantzau*, no opera has met with such an unequivocal success as this musical version of Dickens's Christmas story. It will be surprising if, after the work has received so many signs of public favour in Vienna and Berlin, it does not soon make its appearance in England. The other productions of the past month have been *Die Frauenfrage* (*The Woman Question*) at the Schiller Theatre; *Das Modell* (*The Model*) at the Lessing Theatre; *Soldatenherzen* (*Soldiers' Hearts*) at the Berliner Theatre; and *Der Stellvertreter* (*The Agent*) at the Residenz Theatre. In no case is detailed comment necessary. The dead season here will be a short one, as the Exhibition offers inducements to managers to make the most of the summer and early autumn, there being large numbers of visitors in Berlin just now.

IN VIENNA.

Before the season definitely closed the new management of the Raimund Theatre brought out a three-act comedy entitled *Die Liebe Familie* (*The Amiable Family*), from the Danish of

G. Esmann. The amiable family would more correctly have been entitled "the uninteresting family," for that which goes on in it is mainly matter of indifference to the audience. And when, finally, the members of the family begin to awaken the interest of the audience, they do so by repelling rather than by attracting, for the majority of the persons represented are so low and contemptible that it would be difficult to find them all herded together in one middle-class home. This most unsympathetic piece did not even fulfil its purpose of affording a grateful part to Fräulein Reichenbach, the débutante of the evening. This lady is from the Berlin Lessing Theatre, and has been preceded to Vienna by an excellent reputation. She has a charming appearance and attractive manners, and is generally what may be described as "good style." She did not, however, achieve success until the second piece, the one-act *Militärfromm*, by Moser and Trotha. In this amusing little sketch a lieutenant brings his young wife, an Englishwoman, home from the honeymoon. At first she is very discontented with the military duties and surroundings of her husband, but she afterwards conceives a liking for them, and eventually becomes what the title of the play calls "Militärfromm," that is to say, orthodox in her military views. Fräulein Reichenbach depicted the young lady in an original and charming way; she spoke English-German bewitchingly, imitated with much truth and humour the accent and manner of the daughter of perfidious Albion, and exhibited so much talent and resource, so much wit and refinement, that the public were completely captivated. For parts of this kind, Fräulein Reichenbach is unquestionably a great acquisition to the house.

IN MADRID.

The occasion of a benefit performance at the Principe Alfonso was taken advantage of to produce, as the second item in a long programme, a short lyrical farce, entitled *Los Veteranos;* but, though noble efforts were made by Señorita Cubas, Señora Sabater, and Señores Pinedo and Royo to put life and backbone into the parts allotted to them, nothing could save the new work from a miserable and decisive failure. The name of the author was discreetly withheld. The Buen Retiro produced Meyerbeer's *La Africana* with great success, Señora Mazzi playing Selika, Señorita Garcia Rubio making her *début* as Inés, and Señor Simonetti, Señor Bellagamba, and Señor Silvestri playing respectively the parts of Vasco da Gama,

Nelusko, and Don Pedro. The orchestra was under the direction of Señor Tolosa. *Los Coraceros*, a musical farce in one act, made a very successful first appearance at the Teatro Circo de Colon. It contains a number of effective situations, and a dialogue marked by vivacity and wit. The interpretation, which was mainly in the hands of Señora Banovio, Señoritas Pastor and Bustos, and Señores Talavera, Fuentes, and Iglesias, was excellent, and contributed greatly to the happy issue of the production. The authors, Señor Jiménez Prieto and Señor Valverde, jun., had to respond to several calls before the curtain. Reasoning, perhaps, that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, Señores Ramon and Regidor have ventured to borrow the plot of *Charley's Aunt*, which came under their notice when performed in Madrid under the title of *La Tia de Carlos*, and have trimmed and twisted it into the native Spanish form of a *zarzuela*, or one-act lyrical farce. To complete its naturalisation, they have given their rendering of Mr. Brandon Thomas's work the title of *El Estudiante Segovia*. The best that can be said of the *zarzuela* version of the story is that it is a fair imitation of the original, and consequently its success was assured.

IN NEW YORK.

At the Herald Square Theatre *Olivette* has been revived by the Steindorff and Ebert company, and has been received with all favour. Miss Dorothy Morton was quite up to her usual level as Olivette. The opera was admirably cast throughout, and mounted with unusual care. The only other theatres still open are the Broadway, where *El Capitan* has now been running for fourteen weeks, and the Casino, where *In Gay New York* still amuses large audiences. The latter reached its fiftieth performance on July 10th.

Echoes from the Green Room.

Sir Henry Irving, after passing more than a week in London over his preparations for the revival of *Cymbeline*, has gone for a solitary holiday to Bamborough—a place closely associated with the memory of Grace Darling—on the coast of Northumberland, within easy distance of Berwick-on-Tweed. Before going thither he spent a few days in Edinburgh. It is probable that he will be at the Lyceum by the 22nd of August for the rehearsals of *Cymbeline*, which is expected to appear in the second or third week in September.

Among the guests at Her Majesty's garden party on the 13th ult., at Buckingham Palace, were Sir Henry Irving, Miss Ellen Terry, Mr. and Mrs. Bancroft, Mr. John Hare, Mr. Wyndham, Mr. Forbes Robertson, Mr. and Mrs. George Alexander, Mr. and Mrs. Beerbohm Tree, and Mrs. Keeley. It was a kindly thought to invite the veteran actress of whom the English stage is so justly proud. Sir Henry and Miss Terry, we learn, were cordially greeted by, among many others, Cardinal Vaughan.

Miss Ellen Terry, now resting in the south of England preparatory to her appearance as Imogen, is, we regret to say, suffering from an affection of the eyes, and will probably have to undergo a surgical operation before she returns to the Lyceum.

Lady Martin (Miss Helen Faucit), who is of the same age as the Queen, is again, we regret to learn, dangerously ill.

Dr. Ibsen, still at Christiania, is engaged upon a new play, which, with translations into English, French, and German, may possibly appear by the end of the year.

Madame Bernhardt is resting at Belleisle, where she will remain until the end of August.

Lady Harris, with her brother, Mr. Frank Rendle, will, at least for the present, continue her husband's work at Drury Lane.

Mr. Maurice Grau will in all probability be the next manager of Covent Garden Theatre, in which case Messrs. Abbey and Schoeffel will not be associated with him.

Mr. Tree, who has gone to Marienbad, will not appear on the stage again until, early next year, he opens his new theatre.

The wedding of Mr. H. B. Irving and Miss Dorothea Baird took place at St. Pancras Church on July 20th. Not only outside the church, the interior of which was prettily decorated, but in front of the residence of the bride's brother-in-law, in Tavistock-square, where the reception was held, an immense crowd assembled to do honour to the two, and would not disperse until they had appeared on the balcony.

Readers of *The Theatre* during the last two years do not require to be told that they have suffered a heavy loss by the death of Mr. Charles Dickens, eldest son of the illustrious novelist. He was a frequent and

valued contributor to our pages, usually under his signature, but at times anonymously. The scathing denunciation in *The Theatre* last year of Mr. Daly's mutilations of Shakspere was from his pen. Born in 1837, while the *Pickwick Papers* were in course of publication, Charles Dickens was educated at King's College, Eton, and Leipzig. In his boyhood he was often to be found, with his father, at Gore House, where he made the acquaintance of the future Napoleon III. The elder Dickens had a friend in Miss (now Lady) Burdett-Coutts, who insisted upon bearing the expenses of the boy's education. In his teens he showed a leaning towards a commercial life abroad, and Miss Burdett-Coutts, characteristically enough, offered to give him £25,000 to start with. Before long, however, he began to help in the editorship of *All the Year Round* and *Household Words*, which passed into his possession on the novelist's death (in 1870), but which he disposed of a year or two ago. He wrote a good deal for these and other periodicals, especially in the way of dramatic criticism. He inherited his father's affection for the stage, and was an excellent judge of literature and art in general. One of his works was a "Life of Charles Mathews," chiefly autobiographical. For many years he directed the printing business of Messrs. Dickens and Evans. In 1887 he made a tour of the United States as a reader of selections from his father's books, a character in which he often appeared in this country. On the eve of his departure, the Green Room Club, of which he was one of the earliest members, held a supper in his honour, Mr. Pinero presiding. Unassuming in manner, a quietly humorous *raconteur*, a high-souled and lettered English gentleman, Mr. Dickens will be sorely missed. He leaves a large family, one of whom, Miss Mary Dickens, has distinguished herself both as a novelist and as an actress.

M. Jean and M. Edouard De Reszke have left for Mont-Dore, which they have regularly visited for the last ten years.

With the Lyceum, the Haymarket, the St. James's, the Criterion, and the Garrick all closed, the old fiction of the "theatrical season" might well be revived, and the period that will elapse before the theatres are again in possession of their rightful owners in the autumn might be designated the off-season as far as London is concerned. There would, too, be a certain fitness in this. When London empties of the people who support the more fashionable forms of entertainment, it is only natural that the purveyors of such entertainment should also seek their well-earned rest, and after that, while the moor or the yacht or the country house still keep people out of town, that they should give provincial audiences the opportunity of seeing what London has approved. So it is that the productions of August and September, though there is no lack of them, are for the most part of what is known as a "popular" nature—popular, that is to say, rather among those who are left in town than with those who have departed.

About the end of this, or the beginning of next, month will be produced the new Adelphi piece, *Boys Together*, written by Messrs. Comyns Carr and Haddon Chambers. Mr. Terriss, Mr. Harry Nicholls, Mr. C. W. Somerset, Mr. W. L. Abingdon, Mr. J. D. Beveridge (an old Adelphi favourite, returning after an absence of some little time), and Miss Millward will appear in this. Another melodrama that is soon to be brought out for east-end consumption is *Jack Tars*, by the authors of *Tommy Atkins*, Messrs. Landeck and Shirley.

At the Garrick another "musical comedy" is threatened. This is *Lord Tom Noddy*, to be produced at the beginning of next month, with Mr. Harry Relph, better known as "Little Tich," in the cast. The St. James's will probably be occupied for a time by Miss Grace Hawthorne, with the adaptation of *The Pilgrim's Progress* to which we referred recently; while Mr. Herbert Standing hopes to give at the Criterion, during Mr. Wyndham's absence, a four-act comedy drama, of which he has great hopes.

Mr. Alexander goes on tour with *The Prisoner of Zenda* from August 24th. Mr. Aubrey Smith will then play Black Michael and Miss Ellis Jeffreys Madame de Mauban, in the places of Mr. Herbert Waring and Miss Lily Hanbury. The company will number 78 persons, and will be one of the largest that has ever taken the road. Mr. Yorke Stephens will play Rudolph Rassendyll in the provinces when Mr. Alexander comes back to town, which will be about the third week in October. Soon after this date Mr. Carton's *Tree of Knowledge* will see the light.

Mr. Forbes-Robertson also goes on tour with *For the Crown*, in which Mrs. Patrick Campbell will play Bazilide, Miss Emery's original part, and Miss Sarah Brooke, Militza.

In October Mr. Cyril Maude and Mr. Frederick Harrison open the Haymarket, probably with an adaptation of one of Mr. Stanley Weyman's novels, prepared by Mr. Edward Rose, the adapter of *The Prisoner of Zenda*. Those who remember that Mr. Harrison used to act as well as manage are wondering whether he will be seen again on the boards, where he so successfully took Mr. Tree's place on several occasions as the Duke of Guisebery in *The Dancing Girl*. Mr. Harrison acted for a long time as Mr. Tree's secretary at the Haymarket, and there he also appeared as Page in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, besides playing the King when *Hamlet* was produced at Manchester.

Mr. Wilson Barrett has been out of the cast of *The Sign of the Cross* for a little while, engaged in finishing off his new piece, *Daughters of Babylon*. His place as the Roman prefect, Marcus Suburbanus (as some cynics persist in putting it), was taken by Mr. Cooper Cliffe, an actor who has long supported Mr. Barrett.

Mr. Murray Carson and Mr. L. N. Parker, the authors of *Rosemary*, have written a new comedy for Mr. Charles Wyndham, the action of which takes place in the last century. It is entitled at present *The Spendthrift*.

Mr. Charles Frohman, it is reported, has secured an interest in the Vaudeville Theatre, so as to be able to produce all his successful New York plays in London.

Mr. J. M. Barrie is at work upon a dramatisation of his successful novel, *The Little Minister*, and Mr. Charles Frohman has already secured from Mr. Barrie the sole American rights of the play.

Mr. Dion Boucicault, after a career of some years in Australia as an actor-manager with Mr. Robert Brough, has come to London with an idea of settling here.

By arrangement with Madame Bernhardt, Miss Nethersole will produce *La Duchesse Catherina* in America and in England.

Mr. Burnand and Mr. Lehmann have finished a comic opera, to which Sir Alexander Mackenzie will set the music, and in which Mr. George Grossmith will appear.

Mr. Kerr goes to America with Mr. Hare.

Mr. Penley is reported to be wearing a worried look. His partners at the Globe, Mr. Brandon Thomas and Mr. Hartmont, have taken proceedings against him to recover £10,000, on the ground that he has not played in *Charley's Aunt* for several months.

Miss Helen Kinnaird will play the Queen in Sir Henry Irving's revival of *Cymbeline*.

Mr. Hall Caine has finished another novel, and is reported to be dramatising it for Mr. E. S. Willard.

Mr. Arthur Bourchier goes on tour before long, in spite of the great success of *The Queen's Proctor*. Before he and his company leave for America in the autumn, Westland Marston's *Donna Diana* will be given a trial at the Prince of Wales's Theatre. Mr. Bourchier's present lease of the Royalty will have terminated by that time.

The dramatisation of novels goes on rapidly. Mr. G. W. Appleton's novel, *The Co-respondent*, is already transmogrified, and, indeed, in rehearsal. There is talk also of *The Sorrows of Satan* being seen on the stage.

The musical comedy is not yet dead. Besides *Lord Tom Noddy* at the Garrick, *Monte Carlo* may be seen in the autumn at the Avenue, and *Newmarket*, a piece belonging to Mr. Willie Edouin, is likely to be produced shortly at the Opéra Comique.

On the day after his farewell at the Haymarket, Mr. Tree was over the road, having the memorial stone of his new playhouse "well and truly laid" by his wife. The progress made with the building already has been remarkably quick, but it will not be open until the early spring. If *The Seats of the Mighty*, the version of Mr. Gilbert Parker's novel which Mr. Tree has on hand, is successful in America, it will probably be the first piece seen in the new theatre.

Mr. Rutland Barrington is, sad to relate, leaving the Savoy, and wil probably before long take up Mr. Harry Monkhouse's part in *The Geisha*.

When the royal wedding party visited Daly's Theatre on the 20th ult. and saw *The Geisha*, the Princess Maud was presented on behalf of the company with a silver tea service. This is an innovation we cannot regard without some misgiving. It were ungracious to say more, but it i to be feared that as a rule such presentations are hardly spontaneous so far as the rank and file are concerned.

A drinking fountain has been presented by Mr. and Mrs. A. W. Pinero to Whitstable, where they spent last summer. Mrs. Pinero was struck by the want of water in the neighbourhood for horses and cattle, and the kindly offer of a fountain was gratefully accepted by the local authorities.

Mr. Arthur Bourchier has revived Foote's old comedy, *The Liar*, in two acts, at the Royalty Theatre, for a number of afternoon performances. The part of Young Wilding is one which every ambitious light comedian naturally yearns to play, and if it can hardly be said that Mr. Bourchier's impersonation takes rank with the best, it possesses at any rate many commendable qualities. Of these the most salient are the ease and buoyancy with which the actor invests the character. On the other hand, a somewhat heavy physique and a certain indistinctness of diction serve rather to mar the effect aimed at. As Miss Grantham, Miss Irene Vanbrugh gave a delightfully fresh and lively performance, quite in the truest spirit of old comedy, while Mr. Ernest Hendrie's portrait of Old Wilding

deserves unqualified praise for its care and finish. Unfortunately, little of a favourable nature can be said for the remaining members of the cast.

All earnest students of early dramatic literature owe Mr. William Poel a debt of gratitude for his attempt to produce Christopher Marlowe's play, *The Tragical History of Dr. Faustus*, in its original form and with as near an approach as possible to its original setting. The performance, which took place at St. George's Hall on the evening of Thursday, July 2nd, was made under the auspices of the Elizabethan Stage Society, on a stage modelled upon that of the old Fortune playhouse. Mr. Algernon C. Swinburne, as a token of his sympathy with the movement, wrote for the occasion a characteristic poem, which, in the absence of the author, was recited by Mr. Edmund Gosse. In the representation much, of course, had to be left to the imagination of the spectator, who, if of an irreverent turn of mind, might doubtless have found ample grounds for laughter, not only in the frolics of the Seven Deadly Sins, but also in the more serious parts of the entertainment. Nevertheless, such essays, alike creditable as a respectful tribute to the memory of a great writer and useful on historical grounds as the reproduction of an interesting event, deserve all encouragement and sympathy.

Mrs. Ormiston Chant, by the way, has been to see *The Sign of the Cross*, to which she would like to take "every school in England for children over fourteen." The letter she has written to Mr. Wilson Barrett about the play is a remarkable piece of composition. To begin with, it appears that Mrs. Chant has "a dear and honoured friend" in the United States who has to do with theatres and theatrical entertainments. This is somewhat of a surprise in itself. To this friend she was indebted for her box at the Lyric, in which, at the close of the performance, she "went down on her knees and prayed for the financial success" of Mr. Barrett's venture. "Marcus Superbus," she thinks, "baffles language" (a good many people will agree in this). "He is so beautiful, so lovable, and so noble that words spoil him." London, too, needs "her Mercia and her Marcus," and she apostrophises London in a breathless passage as "the modern Rome, selfish, heartless, greedy . . . fashionable, semi-cultured, heathen, reached at last from that place where the message can be delivered to eye and ear and heart at one and the same time as from nowhere else!" After this unique tribute, Mr. Wilson Barrett must be proud indeed.

M. Jean de Reszke's race-horses have been very successful in Poland and in Russia this year, and he has won on the turf during the season nearly £10,000. When his three-year-old Matador came in first in the "Moscow Derby" the other day, the popular tenor ought, according to custom, to have led the victor round the course, and to have received a valuable trophy from the hands of the Grand Duke Serge. But he was singing in London at the time, and had to be represented by his trainer and the jockey, each of whom, again according to custom, received a gold watch for his share in the victory.

"The article on Stage Syndicates in the July number of *The Theatre*," writes "A Poor Playwright," "is full of truth and knowledge. But the writer might have gone farther in his condemnation of the incursion of the City financier. Directly this individual goes in for theatrical speculation, his wife and his daughters and his lady friends all want a finger in the pie, and particularly are they anxious to teach the dramatic author how to suck eggs. This class of speculator imagines that a play

which he agrees to produce is like a plot of land that he has purchased, and that he and his lady friends and his gentlemen friends are at liberty to alter, clip, and change it to suit their whims and fancies. Many a writer for the stage who has had to deal with these commercial-minded, inartistic Stock Exchange gamblers could unfold tales that would indeed open the eyes of the simple—and the eyes of the critic too. And these men do not always pay their debts. Theatrical syndicates are a curse to the stage."

Mr. Vincent Wallace, son of the composer of *Maritana*, is writing a biography of his father.

The movement in the way of providing suburban theatres for London continues to spread. Fulham is to have its playhouse, with Mr. A. F. Henderson as its manager. It is likely to be completed by the end of the year.

Some years ago Sir Augustus Harris entertained Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes at supper in the foyer of Drury Lane Theatre, during the opera season there. Madame Marie Roze, who had played Carmen that evening, was among the invited guests, but sent word to the manager that it would take her at least half an hour to change her dress. As supper had been announced, and as Dr. Holmes was too old to sit up late, Sir Augustus asked her to come in at once as Carmen. And she did so, much to the delight of all the company, especially the Autocrat, who declared that her rich Spanish costume made a most picturesque contrast to the monotony of the conventional evening dress.

Robert Brough, to whom reference is made in our memoir of Mr. Lionel Brough, was a clever but most improvident sort of person. At one time, overwhelmed with debts, he took refuge at Boulogne. On the following morning he went to the pier, took a tremendous header into the sea, and on rising found himself face to face with his most important creditor. "Blackguard!" roared the latter, "this, then, is the way you spend my money, is it?" Brough expeditiously swam back, got on his clothes, and was away before his irate enemy could overtake him.

The Glasgow Pencil Club entertained Sir Henry Irving at supper on June 25. Councillor Sorley took the chair. Proposing the chief toast, he remarked that their guest had now been for nearly forty years before the public, and even in the Dunlop-street days was a unique figure on the stage. Sir Henry, in reply, referred to his visit to America. "I would like to tell you," he said, "that within this great expanse we found many fellow-countrymen—Glasgow and Edinburgh men and other brother Scots—who always held forth a welcoming hand with a hearty grip of good fellowship. But I fear that this is a theme on which I must not enlarge, for I have been taken somewhat to task by a friendly hand in an Edinburgh journal for a few words which I ventured to say in similar circumstances a few nights ago. From what was said I take it to be the opinion of the writer—and is it any wonder that I do not quite agree with him?—that there is one spot of earth where Scottish traditions, Scottish speech, Scottish customs, and all the thousand endearing ways by which a people are held together, are not to be mentioned, and that spot is north of the Tweed. My austere friend condemns the 'conviviality of Scotsmen whether at home or abroad.' It may have been wrong of me to express the satisfaction which it gave to me to enjoy the good fellowship of certain Scottish gentlemen whom I met in Virginia. Perhaps I ought to have said nothing about it, and carried the guilty secret to my grave. Should I ever have the felicity of encountering my Edinburgh critic, I hope we shall be

unobserved, and that we shall exchange our noble sentiments in some place of hiding over a cup of not too strong tea. But, perhaps, I may plead in mitigation of my offence that some spots of Scotland are very dear to me."

Madame Sarah Bernhardt has in hand a new comedy, *Le Passif*, by M. Georges de Porto Riche, which is to be followed by *La Duchesse Catharine* if the Société des Auteurs et Compositeurs Dramatiques will let her play it, as she thinks they may.

To the review edited by her son, Maurice Bernhardt, Madame Bernhardt has contributed a clever article as to the drama in America. She says that a national drama, properly so-called, does not exist in the United States, where the principal pieces are adaptations, often hardly recognisable, of foreign plays. In America there is an excessive love of sensational scenic effects, but an upward tendency is everywhere observable. In ten years, she thinks, the American stage will be one of the finest in the world.

M. Mounet-Sully recently appeared as Hamlet at the Français, and was entertained by his comrades at dinner "pour le recompenser d'avoir interprété le rôle d'une façon toute personnelle." Of this dinner an amusing account was given in *Le Journal*, together with some even more amusing caricatures of the guest.

Le Gaulois, in a recent article on theatrical and operatic enterprise, remarked, "The Americans are more fortunate than we. They have seen, and continue to see, all the original artists that Europe has produced during the last fifteen or twenty years. When shall we see Irving? When shall we see Madame Modjeska? When shall we see Signora Duse?"

La Comtesse de Casa Miranda (Christine Nilsson) has purchased Watteau's "Diane au Bain," at a cost of 107,000 francs.

Lately, at Genoa, Madame Emma Nevada sang with marked success in *La Sonnambula* and *Lucia*.

Don Juan is to be revived at the Paris Opéra Comique, the principal part being played by M. Maurel, M. Fugère, and Mme. Calvé. The piece will be seen at the same time at the opera.

La Loi de l'Homme, by M. Paul Hervieu, has been unanimously received at the Comédie Française. It is a story of the present day, with scenes at Paris and at Deauville. The two principal parts will be played by M. Le Bargy and Mlle. Bartet.

M. Claretie thinks of reviving *Les Erinnyes*, by Leconte de Lisle, on the day of the unveiling of the monument now being erected in honour of the poet.

Martyre, a five-act drama in verse, by M. Jean Richepin, has been accepted at the Comédie Française. A revival of Alfred de Musset's *Chandelier* may be looked for at the same theatre, probably with Mlle. Mazsy as Jacqueline, M. de Bargy as Fortunis, M. de Férandy as André, and M. Delaunay fils as Clavaroche.

M. Coquelin has had the hardihood to apply to the Ministre des Beaux Arts for permission to set up another Comédie Française in Paris. His appeal against the decision of the Civil Tribunal, condemning him to pay damages to the Comédie for playing at another theatre in Paris, has been unsuccessful. The Superior Court upholds the decision to the extent of £1100 odd, and will increase the fine imposed upon him for every performance he gives in France.

M. Lemaitre, of the *Débats*, shares the views we have expressed as to the critic-dramatist. He is about to give up criticism, intending to devote the whole of his time to playwriting.

In her will Madame Tietjens left her estate to be divided equally between her brother Pietro and two sisters. However, they are to receive only the income of their part during their lifetime, and at their demise the estate is to be equally divided to their children. Pietro Tietjens, who died three years ago, had three sons and one daughter. Pietro, junior, embarked on a vessel over twenty years ago, and has not been heard of since. Hence the estate of Pietro senior cannot be divided among the three children left until after the term of twenty years or more according to English law.

Mendelssohn, as we know, was a true artist. He could never be content with his own work. "One evening," Ferdinand Hillier writes, "I went into his room, and found him in such a feverish state of excitement that I felt quite alarmed. 'What is the matter?' I asked. 'For the last four hours,' he replied, 'I have been trying to alter a few bars in this song; I find I can't do it.' He had made twenty different versions, all of which would have satisfied most people."

It is possible, according to some persons, to have too much, not only of a good thing, but of the best things. Rubinstein once went to Marienbad, and, having to play at a charity concert, thoughtlessly practised until the small hours of the morning. "Sir," wrote to him a countess who failed to recognise him, and prided herself on being an excellent musical critic, "we come here for rest and quiet, and not for the purpose of hearing mere strumming on the piano. If you are determined to make such a noise, try at any rate not to play so many wrong notes!" "Madame," he wrote in reply, "I am sorry that my poor playing should have annoyed you—Anton Rubinstein." From that time, it is understood, she has had less to say upon the subject of piano-playing, or upon her taste as a musical critic, than before.

The centenary of Schubert is to be marked in Vienna by a concert exclusively devoted to his works, and by an exhibiton comprising many relics of his life in that city.

Frau Schönfeld, of the Burg Theatre, Vienna, is about to retire from the stage, her connection with which dates from 1843. She has not been attached to the Burg Theatre during the whole of that time, but for the last twenty years she has been intimately associated with that house. Frau Schönfeld was, and is, at home in the best Viennese circles. Her retirement will not be a cause of loneliness to her. She has been an ornament of the Vienna stage, and she will remain an ornament of Viennese society.

Music, like the Drama, has suffered severely of late in America. The state of things is such as to remind a writer in the *Musical Age* of an advertisement inserted in an English paper at a time of financial depression—"Violin taught at sixpence a lesson; bun and glass of milk included." By buying a ten shilling mandolin in one small New Jersey town you may, it seems, get a dozen lessons thrown in—as many, you are gravely assured, as are needed to obtain a "complete mastery" over the instrument.

Signor Verdi recently visited Milan to make his first gift of 400,000 lire to the House of Rest for aged and infirm artists, which he is building near the Porta Magenta. He will contribute twice this sum to it before long, and has remembered the charity in his will. "For," he says, "it is to

the artists that I owe my fortune. Why should I not dedicate it to them?" Yet, as the *Musical Age* remarks, there is something unusual in the spectacle of the composer providing for the artists. Look at the scanty remuneration received for some of the greatest of musical works. Beethoven might have starved but for the generosity of his royal patrons; Mozart slaved night and day to provide for himself and his family; Chopin made most of his money by tuition; Wagner, who was more fortunate than either, got only about £250 for *Tristan and Isolde*.

THE almost general stagnation which set in at the beginning of last month is still the prevailing feature of theatrical matters in all parts of Italy. Signor Romualdo Marenco, the composer of the music to *Excelsior*, has written an opera entitled *Strategia d'Amore*, which is to make its appearance, probably at Milan, before many weeks have elapsed.

LAST month it was our sad duty to record the death of Signor Ernesto Rossi, the great Italian actor. It is consoling to know that his memory has been honoured in his native country in no ordinary way. At the Costanzi Theatre in Rome a meeting has been held, at which there was present a large and brilliant assemblage. The memorial speech was delivered by Professor Panzacchi, who dwelt on the great genius and high worth of the dead tragedian, and deplored the fact that Signor Rossi's talent had necessarily descended with him to the grave. There was a period of intense enthusiasm when Adelaide Ristori, who is now seventy-eight years of age, made her appearance leaning on Signor Salvini's arm. The applause was of at least ten minutes' duration, and when it had subsided, she recited, with incomparable charm, the scene of Francesca da Rimini from Dante's *Divine Comedy*. The whole house rose at the conclusion of the recitation, and recalled half a dozen times the white-haired *tragédienne*, who could not conceal her emotion. Similar applause greeted Signor Salvini, who, with hardly less magical voice than in the days of yore, and his ever admirable art, declaimed the poem, "The Dying Byron." The proceedings ended with the unveiling of a marble bust of Signor Rossi, which has been executed by the eminent sculptor Ferrari. The bust stood on the stage, which had been transformed into a tropical garden. Around it stood the most distinguished of Italian actors, and, while the organ played a funeral dirge, Signora Marini stepped forward and crowned the bust with ten laurel wreaths which had been sent by the Ministry of Education, the Municipality of Rome, and other corporations. A long list of telegrams and inscriptions which had come from all sides was also read to the meeting.

MR. BRANDER MATTHEWS, playwright, essayist, and lecturer on English literature in Columbia College, has been expressing his views to a New York interviewer on the subject of the drama. "I do not," he said, "believe in adaptations. A man who is capable of original work should never put his pen to them. Mr. Sydney Grundy, for example, makes a great mistake, I believe, in dividing his time between plays of his own and the plays of other people. A man is invariably judged by his adaptations, and not at all by his original work. If he is successful at adaptation they do not believe him capable of anything else.

"IF your play fails there is something the matter with it, and you had better bow at once to the public decision. Naturally enough, many literary people take to novel-writing. You sell three thousand copies; your labour has not been in vain; you have pleased three thousand

readers. But a play to succeed must please one thousand people every night. To be a success it cannot run much under thirty nights. That means it must please thirty thousand people of distinct minds and tastes. A successful play, therefore, must appeal to twenty-seven thousand more people than a successful novel. So I believe that the novel, as an easier form of artistic expression, has finally taken precedence over the play. Again, the field of the novelist is freer than the playwright's. The drama can never again be the power that it once was.

"THE dramatic present in England is distinctly creditable to the countrymen of Shakspere. Mr. Pinero is a dramatist of rare power. In France things are at a standstill. During the last fifteen years she has not produced one good dramatist. She has ceased to feed the English and the American theatres. The plays made in Paris nowadays are not possible for London or New York.

"CRITICISM has never helped anyone. When a play or a picture comes before the critic, it is supposed to be as near finality as human endeavour can accomplish. No critic knows as much about a play or a book as the author himself. When I broached Mr. Booth on this question once, he told me candidly that he never got the slightest help from criticism of his work. The only critics he put faith in were those in the country towns. He used to read what they wrote simply from curiosity. They expressed themselves uncouthly, but often they hit the nail on the head. Criticism is the hardest art in the world—I mean, of course, criticism of the higher kind."

IN the list of the creditors of Messrs. Abbey, Schoeffel, and Grau figure the names of many actors and singers who have lately visited America. To M. Jean de Reszke, Madame Melba, Madame Nordica, and Sir Henry Irving alone they owe in the aggregate nearly twenty-five thousand dollars. Madame Bernhardt's name is conspicuously absent from the list. Her last American tour seems to have been unfortunate, and it is evident that the firm wrecked itself by paying her in full.

To the Paris *Figaro* Madame Bernhardt has no word to say regarding the failure of Messrs. Abbey and company, but she pays a warm tribute to the abilities of Mr. Maurice Grau. "How many of us," she said, "never had any contract with him? Only his word, a hand-shake, and we started for the Americas! My last two tours were made thus, and I have never had even the shadow of a discussion with Maurice Grau. Ask the De Reszkes, Melba, and Calvé whether they will hesitate one moment to follow him next season. His great ambition was to get the Comédie Française to America —a dream which cannot be realised. He knows that in spite of the enormous receipts that the Comédie would surely make, nothing would remain; the costs would take everything. All of us are willing and ready to support him to the utmost of our power."

M. MAUREL and Madame Melba have also been interviewed in Paris upon the same subject. "I am not surprised," the former said. "I told M. Grau that it was only a question of time, that ruin was sure under the conditions that prevailed with his enterprise in America. That was almost three years ago. It has lasted longer than I thought! You cannot work for art and pay thirty or forty thousand dollars a night to your artists. Under such conditions æsthetic considerations are the least likely to appeal to the manager. The result is no longer art; it is a fashion, a passing whim, a fad. There can be nothing stable about such

an enterprise." Madame Melba was more generous. "I shall go to America again next year," she said, "and it will be with Messrs. Abbey and Grau. I know nothing of their difficulties, but they have carried out their contracts with me."

THE latest phase of the situation is that the Abbey firm has been merged in a directorate of creditors, of which Mr. William Steinway is chairman. The re-organised corporation is known as "Abbey, Schoeffel, and Grau, Limited," and the lease of the Metropolitan Opera House has already been transferred to them. The three members of the late firm have been appointed managers of the company at a salary. It is estimated that from the Opera House alone they ought to clear 150,000 dollars every year, and that within two years every creditor will be paid with interest.

ABBEY'S Theatre has been leased to Mr. Al. Hayman for a period of five years. The name of the theatre is to be altered, but we believe there is no truth in the statement that it is to be called the Knickerbocker.

THE death of Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe, which occurred at Hartford at the beginning of last month, must be recorded here, if only for the reason that she was the authoress of so important a work, historically considered, as *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, which has been dramatised many times. But she had another and not so commendable a claim to notice in these pages. In 1869 she published in the *Atlantic Monthly* two articles upon Lord Byron, alleging that his wife left him because he had been guilty of incest. The charges were victoriously refuted by the Hon. Mrs. Norton in *The Times*, and by Mr. Alfred Austin, the present Poet Laureate, in the *Standard*. It is not surprising that such an incident should have virtually ended the calumniator's career. Her name thenceforward stank in the nostrils of all good people.

Shakspere and Music is the title of a recently-published book by Mr. E. W. Naylor, in which is propounded a theory to the effect that Shakspere wrote with a special regard to musical accompaniments to his plays. The book contains an admirably graphic and picturesque account of the musical life of the sixteenth century—from the drunken tinkers sitting by the alehouse fire, with the pot of ale between their legs, to Queen Elizabeth herself whiling away a weary hour at the virginals. To all lovers of musical history the work will be both interesting and valuable.

MR. DION BOUCICAULT, shortly before his death, completed a play which he called *Ourselves*. It is probable that Mr. Augustin Daly will present this work in New York, but as Mr. Burnand has already used the title in his adaptation of Labiche's *Moi*, the play will doubtless be renamed if designed for production in England.

AN excellent book on the planning and construction of American theatres has just been published in New York by Messrs. Wiley and Sons, and in London by Messrs. Chapman and Hall. It is by Mr. William H. Birkmire, the architect, and has many illustrations of play-houses.

THE THEATRE.

SEPTEMBER, 1895.

Our Watch Tower.

THE STAGE HISTORY OF *CYMBELINE*.

IF *Cymbeline*, soon to be revived by Sir Henry Irving at the Lyceum, is not among the first of Shakspere's plays, and has never been very familiar to the public through the medium of the stage, it must always be regarded as a work of rare interest, beauty, and force. It seems to have been produced for the first time in or about 1610, at the time when its author was in full possession of the genius which not long previously had found expression in *Macbeth*, *Lear*, and *Othello*. Possibly it may have provoked comparisons with the last-named masterpiece, as Posthumus and Iachimo afford in some degree the same kind of contrast as the Moor and Iago. Dr. Simon Forman, the astrologer, refers to what must have been one of the earliest performances of the play, in which Richard Robinson took part. Resorting to Holinshed for an ancient British background, Shakspere here relates a story derived from the *Decameron*, probably through the translation quaintly entitled *Westward for Smelts*. Apart from a marked looseness of construction, the result is a fascinating example of dramatic art. Dr. Johnson, it is true, described some of the incidents as of "unresisting imbecility." But the good old sage was not precisely fitted to pass judgment upon Shakspere, and a few of us may venture to think that the "imbecility" lay rather with the critic than with the criticised. Appreciative students, we think, will be more inclined to agree with Schlegel in treating *Cymbeline* as one of the poet's most remarkable compositions. Posthumus, induced to believe that his wife has been unfaithful to him; Iachimo, a Iago without his specially vindictive purpose; Imogen, a pattern

of womanhood in its purest, highest, and most gracious aspect, exhibited now and then amidst picturesque surroundings,—all these characters, with the rest, are delineated with exceptional vividness. While not in favour of criticism in advance, of which Mr. Clement Scott was good enough to favour us two years ago in regard to the intended performances in English of *Madame Sans-Gêne*, we can hardly be in any sort of doubt as to what will be done at the Lyceum with *Cymbeline*. In Miss Ellen Terry, of course, we shall have an ideal Imogen. Mr. Frank Cooper, a descendant of the Kembles, may be trusted to give a good account of Posthumus. Sir Henry Irving, contrary to the usual practice of leading actors in the past, elects to play Iachimo; and those who remember his superb Iago—why does he not give it us again?—well know what to expect of him in the coming revival.

Cymbeline, like greater plays by the same hand, has more than once been "improved" almost out of all resemblance to itself. In 1682, at the Theatre Royal, the substance of it might have been recognised in a play called *The Injured Princess, or the Fatal Wager*. The adapter, Tom Durfey, thought fit to make important changes in the scheme, the language, and even the names of the characters. Posthumus is turned into an Ursaces, Iachimo into a Shatillon, and Imogen into an Eugenia. Most of the scene passes in Ladstown, otherwise London. How the piece was cast we are not told. Durfey, perhaps thinking that at least in one sense Shakspere's example might well be imitated, does not shrink from rather violent anachronisms; as Genest points out, he decorates this story of ancient Britain with references to Puritans, packet-boats, and so forth. For a prologue he fell back upon what had served as an epilogue to his *Fool Turned Critic*, acted at the same house four years before. Clumsy as it may have been, *The Injured Princess* did not immediately pass out of recollection, since it was revived at the theatre in Lincoln's-inn-fields in 1720, and at Covent Garden in 1738 as a piece by Shakspere "revised." Therewith, it would appear, the noxious thing disappeared from the stage for ever, at least as far as London was concerned. Even worse than *The Injured Princess* was a *Cymbeline* produced in 1759 by a William Hawkins, Professor of Poetry at Oxford. Bent upon a strict preservation of the unities, he reconstructed the play, deprived Imogen of half her attractiveness, and—ingeniously managed to omit Iachimo altogether. In a versified *Essay on Genius*, we remember, this hardy mutilator invoked Heaven to "let him practise what he strove to teach," and confessed to "longings for a poet's name." His version of *Cymbeline* is a

pretty conclusive proof that he could never have justified such aspirations by results.

Meanwhile, in 1744, at the Haymarket, then in the hands of Theophilus Cibber, the original play, perhaps with some trifling alterations, had struggled back to the stage. Probably it excited some admiration, as two years later it was given at Covent Garden for the benefit of Woodward. On this occasion Ryan was the Posthumus, Hall the Iachimo, and Mrs. Pritchard the Imogen. Next came a performance at Drury Lane in 1761, Garrick playing Posthumus. "We are bold to affirm," writes Francis Gentleman in the *Dramatic Censor*, "that considering an actor must make the part, not the part an actor, his astonishing talents were never more happily exerted. The tenderness of his love, the pathos of his grief, the fire of his rage, and the distraction of his jealousy, have never been surpassed, and possibly, in Posthumus, never equalled." He was supported by Holland as Iachimo, and by Miss Bride as Imogen. For a wonder, he was content to make a few "omissions and transpositions" in the play. In the course of a few years several Imogens came before the public—Mrs. Yates (described by the *Dramatic Censor* as "wanting in an essential elegant innocence"), Mrs. Baddeley, Mrs. Bulkeley, and Miss Younge. The last of these had no less an actor than Henderson for her Posthumus. The most noticeable Iachimo of what may be called the Garrick period was Holland. He often played it to the Posthumus of a life-long friend, Powell. By a curious coincidence, it was in these characters that the two acted together for the first and last time.

Kemble had a sort of affection for *Cymbeline*, but could not be restrained from altering it to suit what he deemed the requirements of the stage in his day. He was even capable, *à la* Durfey, of renaming some of the personages. He played Posthumus at Drury Lane in 1785, Mrs. Jordan, surely a round peg in a square hole here, being the heroine. Mrs. Siddons appeared as Imogen for her benefit in 1787, and that with so much acceptance that the play was repeated many times that year. According to Campbell, she gave greatness to the part without diminishing its gentleness. Whether she was equally successful in its tenderness may be matter of doubt. In the cave scenes she was ill at ease: "sketch for me," she asked Hamilton, the artist, "a boy's dress to conceal the person as much as possible." Smith, the Iachimo, is spoken of as excellent, particularly in the lighter sides of the character. In 1801, at Drury Lane, Kemble again acted Posthumus to his sister's Imogen, the chamber scene being more pictorially effective than anything in that way yet seen on the stage. Five

years later he had an admirable Iachimo in George Frederick Cooke, and six years after that a still more admirable one in Charles Young. On the eve of his retirement, in 1816, he was Posthumus to the Imogen of Miss Stephens, soon to be Countess of Essex.

By far the most noteworthy revival of *Cymbeline* took place at Drury Lane in 1823, while Edmund Kean and Young were acting together. "Since Quin and Garrick, or Garrick and Barry, no conjunction of great names," writes Doran, "had moved the theatrical world like this. Both men put out all their powers, and the public profited by the magnificent display." Kean, as might have been expected of so great an Othello, made an almost perfect Posthumus. He was splendid in the quiet dignity of the earlier scenes, and his torrent of feeling when Iachimo cheated him into the belief of Imogen's infidelity is described by his biographer, Mr. Frederick Hawkins, as "overwhelming in a direction more peculiarly his own." In the words of Talfourd, writing in the *New Monthly*, "this Posthumus was fitful, passionate, and wayward, with occasional touches of tender thought and pathetic remorse. His suppressed passion when Iachimo first questions Imogen's virtue was finely portrayed, though his best exertions were reserved for the scene where the scoffer returns apparently triumphant. Here the transitions from indifference to rage, from rage to listening anxiety, from suspense to the agony of conviction, with the relapse into hope and love, 'hit fiery off indeed.'" With regard to Young, we learn from the same authority that "the cool dry sarcasms were given with the most appropriate voice and gesture, and the descriptions of Imogen with a poetic fervour which seemed to redeem a part morally despicable, and to cast an intellectual glory around ineffable meanness of purpose and of action." In a performance at Covent Garden in 1825, Charles Kemble figured as Posthumus, Young as Iachimo, and Miss Foote as Imogen. Four years later, at the same house, Young impersonated the husband, this time to the Imogen of Miss Phillips.

Macready played both Posthumus and Iachimo, but did not make a conspicuous mark in either. His best Imogen was Miss Helen Faucit, who for some years made the part her own. Phelps produced *Cymbeline* at Sadler's Wells on three occasions —in 1847, in 1854, and in 1857. In each instance he was his own Posthumus, Henry Marston was his Iachimo. The Imogens were Miss Laura Addison, Miss Cooper, and Mrs. Charles Young (Mrs. Hermann Vezin). Phelps's last appearance in the play was not made, however, until 1864, when he again figured as Posthumus (this time at Drury Lane) to the Iachimo of Creswick and the Imogen of Miss Faucit. Miss Faucit, if we

remember rightly, has been seen as Imogen at least as late as 1865, if not later. In 1865 she was Imogen at Drury Lane, with James Anderson as the Iachimo and Walter Montgomery as the Posthumus. Miss Faucit has outlived at least two other representatives of Posthumus's tender spouse—Mrs. Mowatt, who personated the gentle lady in London so long ago as 1849, and Miss Avonia Jones, whose Imogen was exhibited to playgoers in the English provinces so lately as 1863.

It is customary to say that *Cymbeline* has not been seen in London since 1872, whereas, as so many remember, it was put on at the Queen's Theatre, with Miss Henrietta Hodson as the heroine, to the Iachimo of John Ryder, the Posthumus of Mr. George Rignold, the Belarius of Henry Marston, the Queen of Miss Fanny Huddart, and the Cloten of Mr. Lewis Ball. It is true that this was the last time that *Cymbeline* was ever represented in London "for a run." Since then, London theatre-lovers have witnessed the play only twice—namely, at Drury Lane on December 4th, 1878, and at the Gaiety on March 28th, 1883. In each of these cases the Imogen was Miss Ellen Wallis (Mrs. Lancaster). At the first of the two representations John Ryder and Miss Huddart reappeared as Iachimo and the Queen, Posthumus being in the hands of the then "young and rising" actor, Mr. Edward Compton. The second representation was the more notable, for Iachimo was then interpreted by Mr. E. S. Willard, Mr. J. H. Barnes being the Posthumus, and that other "young and rising" actor, Mr. George Alexander, contenting himself with the modest part of Guiderius.

Portraits.

MISS CLARA JECKS.

OF the daughter of Mr. Charles Jecks, long the acting manager at the Adelphi, and his widely-popular wife, Miss Harriet Coveney, it would seem a strange thing to say that she was distinctly unfortunate in having been born an Englishwoman. There can be no doubt that, as any of Molière's soubrettes, Miss Clara Jecks would have been almost unapproachable, and our own drama, unhappily, affords but poor opportunities to the actress anxious to gain distinction in parts of that kind. Miss Jecks, accordingly, has had to be content with displaying her brilliant comedy powers in such characters as the Middy in *The Middy Ashore*, Arethusa in *The Member for Slocum*, Sally Scraggs in *Stage-Struck*, the page boys in *Santa Claus* and *Gentleman Joe*, and Selina Sparks—a "slavey"—in *A Merry Madcap*, with which she is now touring in the provinces. Until within the last three or four years she figured in every new production at the Adelphi Theatre, with few exceptions. Her scenes with Mr. J. L. Shine were always awaited on a first night with the keenest curiosity and interest, and will long be remembered as masterpieces of comedy acting. The versatility which has marked Miss Jecks' career may be judged from the fact that, having made one or two successful experiments, she at one time nearly decided to be a tragic actress. At the last moment, however, she came to the conclusion that she was not tall enough. For this disappointment she has had no ordinary consolation in her present reputation as a *comédienne*, which deservedly stands very high. The musical profession was chosen for her by her parents as the one she was to follow, and at a very early age she attained a marked proficiency as a piano player. In addition to this, her charming contralto voice and graceful dancing make her much sought after in these days of musical comedies. One of her earliest parts was that of Lord Eden, the coxswain of the Oxford crew, in *Formosa;* and, owing to her exceptionally clever conception of that young sprig of nobility, and to the special praise bestowed upon her by the press, her manager, in practical recognition of her contribution to the success of the piece, doubled her salary from the second night. She was for some few years under-study to Miss Nellie Farren, whom she describes as "the kindest and most charming of women," and who paid her the rare compliment of personally teaching her several parts.

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MISS CLARA JECKS.

The Round Table.

IS SAVOY OPERA PLAYED OUT?

By Ernest Kuhe.

DAME Rumour, who, as George Eliot has reminded us, is in reality "a very old maid," and who "does no more than chirp a wrong guess into the ear of a fellow gossip," has been busy of late with the future plans of two gentlemen holding, in their particular sphere, an unrivalled position in the world of music and the drama, and whose combined efforts for close on twenty years have contributed in a striking degree to the legitimate and wholesome enjoyment of a mirth-loving public. Scarce is there any need to mention by name these industrious and resourceful collaborators, whose individuality is as pronounced as their popularity is widespread, and who have found many imitators, but assuredly no compeers. For the moment, though, I will refer to only one of the two, and devote myself to the consideration of the lamentable consequences foreshadowed by the recent announcement — unofficial, it is true, but seemingly veracious — that the inimitable composer of *The Sorcerer* and of the delightful scores that succeeded it has resolved to lay aside his pen once and for all, and seek no further accession of fame.

Now, what, it may be asked in the first place, is the foundation for this statement? Times out of mind has the "talkative maiden" above referred to busied herself with the lyrical schemes and private affairs of the author and composer of *Patience* and *The Mikado*, and imparted to a public thirsting for trustworthy information the melancholy tidings that they had witnessed positively the last of the Mohicans in the series of Savoy successes, and that a difference of opinion, real or imaginary, between these distinguished authors would make any future achievement in the field of collaboration impossible. Scores of times have these and similar assertions obtained currency and credence and been discussed in the green-room, the family circle, and in public prints, wherein, of course, such *on dits* have been served up with an elaboration of detail, gleaned, apparently, from authentic sources, reflecting unspeakable credit on the art, ingenuity, and industry of the professional retailer of gossip. In no instance, indeed, have the private concerns of theatrical folk received more con-

stant and faithful attention at the hands of irresponsible scribes and tittle-tattle mongers than in the case of William Schwenk Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan. At their expense, molehills necessitating, before they could be discovered, artificial aid to ordinary visual capacity, have been enlarged to mountains of fabulous proportions, and the "dissolute paragraphist," as he has been called, has many a time and oft sought to emulate the most prodigious achievements of the immortal Baron Münchausen. And true or false, real or apocryphal, the rumours so persistently circulated on this inexhaustible subject have invariably had the same sequel. "Why, it was but yesterday," says the modern, Mrs. Candour to Sir Benjamin Backbite's present-day prototype, "that I was told that there has been a reconciliation between Mr. Gilbert and Sir Arthur," &c. Thus has it been in every instance. It mattered not whether the alleged or actual *casus belli* had its origin in the precise monetary responsibility attaching to author and composer in respect of the ruinous expenditure involved by the purchase of a new carpet for the playhouse which had witnessed their many triumphs, or whether the question in dispute was the relative capacity of a particular artist as actress or singer—the *dénouement* has ever been the same. The distinguished *confrères* may have sworn enmity in different circumstances each as wide asunder as the poles, but in every case the result has been identical—a happy, warm, genial *rapprochement*, promising undying friendship as between the incomparable purveyors of laughter and melody, and a prolonged era of "innocent merriment" for a staunch and grateful public.

But what is this we hear whispered now as to the final and irrevocable dissolution of the famous partnership? Not, wonderful to relate, that a fresh misunderstanding has arisen, or that, pending the patching up of a regrettable quarrel, Sir Arthur Sullivan will seek a new co-worker in the realms of light opera, but that he has determined henceforth to resist the allurements of public applause and critical enconiums and retire permanently on his well-earned laurels. And the reason ——? Here must I pause, and take counsel with myself as to how far I may be entitled to re-echo current reports in this connection which do not seem to be justified by fact. Rather let me endeavour to disabuse certain minds of a belief which appears to have taken firm root therein, and dispel, if possible, the idea, pretty freely expressed of late, that the facile and fanciful pen which has alternately charmed and exhilarated us again and again has at last exhausted itself in its oft-repeated mission to inspire wonder and delight. Surely—surely those amateurs who

lent an attentive ear to the more recent of the Savoy scores, and noted the humour, the buoyancy, the unstudied gaiety—say of *Utopia*—and marked the grace, the refinement, and the unfailing tunefulness of the lately withdrawn *Grand Duke*, must find it difficult to endorse the opinion of the thoughtless who now declare that the "Sullivan of old" is heard only in the strains of his former works. In point of fact—or perhaps it would be wiser to say in the view of the present writer—it is hard to reconcile in this matter actual achievement with the voice of the public as expressed by the sudden and surprising withdrawal of the piece just named. And yet it is this very event which has brought about all this talk of retirement, and this unsolicited explanation of the alleged decision. In so many words, what is now being said is that the last Savoy venture ceased to please, that its immediate predecessor was an admitted fiasco, and that even *Utopia, Limited*, which marked the renewal of a partnership temporarily severed by the production of *Haddon Hall* (the work that saw Mr. Grundy in the shoes—which did not fit him—of Mr. Gilbert) proved only a comparative success. And, finally, from this undoubtedly disconcerting sequence of events is drawn the deduction that the art-form invented by the makers of *Pinafore*, matured and developed with each succeeding production, and brought to unquestionable perfection in *The Mikado*—incontrovertibly a masterpiece, as regards both the libretto and the score—has seen its best days, and is no longer capable of worthy illustration at the hands of those who conceived it.

To assume for the moment the truth of the story that is going the rounds, it seems to me that we have to look for a different and far more cogent reason for Sir Arthur Sullivan's contemplated inaction than that which has been advanced. It is surely an impotent argument to urge that, having struck a particular vein in the domain of musical composition, and worked its resources "for all they are worth"—to speak colloquially—the materials are exhausted, and nothing further remains to be accomplished in the same direction. True it is that the ingredients that went to make up the earlier works produced by Mr. D'Oyly Carte and served to render them acceptable to his patrons were to be found in the more recent of the series. But—and herein I espy the keynote of the present situation—there came a time when, as was clearly inevitable, the devices and methods of author and composer ceased to bear the charm of novelty, when their mode of working, revealed by constant repetition, became so familiar that their very ideas in the way of jest and rhythm were almost anticipated by their audience, and when the latter, having, by reiterated approbation, tied the

"Savoyards" down, so to speak, to a groove of limited possibilities, turned round, and, with the delightful inconsistency of man, exacted something fresh and virile and striking wherein the element of surprise was to be as strong as in the works that they had formerly stamped with their unstinted approval. Put it this way. Assume that *Utopia* had been the first of the series, and the *Pirates*—to take one of the earlier examples—the last, is it not strictly logical and rational to lay it down as more than probable that the first-named opera would have been voted a gem of humour and brightness and melody, and the latter but a tolerable variation on a well-worn plan of paradox and musical theme? Personally I am all in favour of such a supposition, and assuredly it is a more generous view to take of the case than to say of two writers who have served the public faithfully, and with genuine artistic intent for years out of memory that they have lost their inventive powers, and—tell it not in Gath!—have "written themselves out."

Needless to say, the theory that the public and not the authors are responsible for the mediocre success of latter-day Savoy operas is capable of infinite expansion and suggestive illustration. Far be it from me to dictate to the present generation of play-goers as to the precise amount of enjoyment they ought to derive from various forms of theatrical fare or to rail at the patrons of music and the drama in general—and Savoyites in particular—for their apparent lack of consistency. But I venture most humbly to suggest, in breaking my lance for Sir Arthur and his associate, that the roars of laughter that greeted the Mikado's grim pleasantries on the subject of a protracted punishment—"something humorous, but lingering, with either boiling oil or melted lead"—were far more boisterous and sustained than those that rewarded a delicious epigram in a later opera whereby a certain character was credited with "combining the manners of a Marquis with the morals of a Methodist," while I make bold to aver that the surprise and mirth occasioned by the whimsical notion of making the members of a Cabinet Council suddenly adopt the customs of Ethiopian entertainers "at the Court of St. James's Hall"—a noteworthy Savoy incident of comparatively recent date—would have been considerably intensified had not the clever author, many years before, with characteristic and audacious flights of fancy, poked irresistible fun at the Lord Chancellor and the House of Peers under the very shadow of Big Ben.

Did space permit, I might endeavour to trace, in a measure, to another source the decline in public appreciation of a form of musical and comedy art which until recently had so successfully

endured the test of popularity, and withstood the influence of newer and competitive attractions. But I must leave it to others who may see fit to add their voice to mine in the consideration of the side issues raised by this question to adjudge how far the demand for so-called "musical comedies," created by a too generous supply of this species of theatrical production, has served to blunt public taste, and oust from supreme favour the more refined and delicate school of genuine light opera. Upon this phase of the subject much no doubt might be written, but for the present purpose it is more important, regard being had to the immediate future, to consider what are the prospects of those music-lovers who have hitherto looked to Mr. D'Oyly Carte and his coadjutors for amusement of a wholesome and exhilarating character. Would that it were possible to paint those prospects in roseate colours! Happy indeed would be the task of the prophet who could legitimately foretell a speedy return of the public to their old loves, and such a general disposition on their part as would induce the Savoy triumvirate once again to join hands in the preparation of yet another venture in the genial realms of wit and fantasy and ear-enchanting strains. But we hear of no such intention. The air is charged with rumours;—hints of the surrender of the Carte fortress to a revolutionary populace clamouring for a new *régime* that will fling the old statute books to the winds, cast aside tradition, and institute an entirely new order of things—in other words, depose the aforetime favourites who established a long era of artistic prosperity, and enthrone in their place the present favourites of the "unenlightened majority" who have effected a close alliance between the "variety" theatres and the legitimate boards. But let us earnestly hope for the failure of all such attempts to force the hands of the present ruler, and pay heed, rather, to another report which credits him with the intention of giving his subjects an opportunity of rendering homage for a while to the undimmed memory of Jacques Offenbach. If it be true that we are no longer to sit under the magic spell of Arthur Sullivan, may it at least not be found in the near future that his place has been unworthily filled? No one, assuredly, will quarrel with any managerial project by which agreeable memories would be revived. Our traditional insular prejudices will scarcely lead us to deny the claims on our sympathy of the composer of the *Grand Duchess*, or, indeed, of any other foreign writer of real distinction—even at such a stronghold of English musical art as the Savoy. But most emphatically would the *habitués* of a theatre so honourably identified with the highest form of light lyrical entertainment resent any attempt to foist on them, in response to the demands

of a less art-loving section of playgoers, a type of production in the least degree analogous to that which has too long held sway elsewhere under the rule of "government by syndicate." Happily, though, there are still to be heard, in the midst of all the sinister rumours, idle gossip, and irresponsible chatter that find utterance in certain quarters, the welcome voices of those who recognise in the past services of an astute, art-loving, and popular manager the assurance that, come what may, his theatre will ever remain true to its unsullied traditions.

IS "REALISM" ON THE STAGE OVERDONE?

By Arthur William à Beckett.

"NOW show us sumut else." Such was the request addressed to the manager on the occasion of the inauguration of the Royal Coburg Theatre. The manager who was lessee of a playhouse subsequently to be renamed the Victoria (affectionately abbreviated by its patrons into "The Vic.") had put forth much of his managerial strength in providing a mirror curtain. The drop scene was constructed of looking-glass, and the promised novelty had been (for those times) largely advertised. The initial audience, with their curiosity stimulated by the promises on the bill, had assembled in their hundreds, and impatiently tolerated the green cloth which, according to the regulation, divided the auditorium from the region behind the footlights. They wanted to see the mirror curtain, and would be satisfied with nothing else. So, after a while, when the glass had been set by the willing if grimy hands of a score of stage carpenters, the rag was rung up, and the tenants of pit, boxes, and gallery saw their reflection before them. Unfortunately they were disappointed. Instead of one huge sheet of glass the mirror was composed of many squares held together by a mass of panel work. Then there were impressions of the horny palms of toil, telling of much exertion to keep the affair steady on the part of the artisans behind the scenes. Perhaps the panels and the impressions between them spoilt the effect, for instead of a thrill of admiration there was a roar of laughter. Then a gentleman in the gallery made the request to which I have already referred, and shouted "Now show us sumut else," and the manager of the Coburg (being a wise man) accepted the suggestion. The green cloth was dropped, the programme was played, and nothing more was heard of the mirror curtain for the rest of the evening.

It may be that the time has arrived when that portion of the British public who patronise theatres are asking to see "sumut

else." I say advisedly "see," because I wish to deal with the scenery of plays rather than with their authors' work. Are not people becoming rather weary of the elaborate sets which cause such long *entr'actes* and do so much to empty the managerial coffers? Is not a devotion springing up in favour of the sweet simplicity of the front cloth and the couple of behind-the-footlight chairs? I am inclined so to believe, the more especially as many of our critics have complained that acting nowadays is sacrificed to the claims, not only of the scene-painters, but of the gentlemen who provide the curtains, the cabinets, the carpets, and the tables. It may not be out of place, now that the season is closing, to devote a few minutes' consideration to the question whether this is really the case.

It may be convenient to inquire into the identity of the promoter of modern stage realism. Many, no doubt, will declare that the honour of destroying the old traditions belongs to Mr. and Mrs. Bancroft, who did so much for scenic effect in the little house off the Tottenham-court-road, once known as the Queen's *alias* "The Dusthole," and subsequently christened the Prince of Wales's. It was in this charming and tiny temple of the drama that Miss Marie Wilton and the then rising young actor who was soon to become her husband produced *Society*, *Ours*, *Caste*, *School*, *Play*, *M.P.*, *Tame Cats*, and *The Merchant of Venice*. Even in those early days everything was intensely real, but the perfection of production was reached in the revival of *The Rivals* at the Haymarket a few years later on, when the initial ten minutes of the first scene of Sheridan's comedy was played in dumb show. On the stage was built up a street in Bath. Then the shutters of the shops were taken down, beaux and belles crossed the stage—some in sedan chairs—and waiting-maids entered the circulating library in search of new volumes for their mistresses' boudoirs. There were revellers, watchmen, and lamp extinguishers. It was a most amusing "living picture" of life in the last century, but it was scarcely Sheridan. So said the Press on the day following the production, and the revival was, if a success (I doubt it), only one of esteem. But before the Bancrofts were the Crummles, and anterior to Dickens's creation J. R. Planché, sometime Somerset Herald. A short while ago I was looking through a book containing parodies of the work of playwrights flourishing half a century ago, and came across a notice of the style of the gentleman to whom I have just referred. Mr. Planché, whose book upon costume is a classic, was described as "the upholsterer of the drama." Some sixty lines were devoted to the stage directions for the set of the first scene in the first act. The pattern of the *tapis*, the fashion of the hangings,

the contents of the cabinets, were all given in the minutest detail. The volume purported to contain scenes from rejected comedies sent in for a prize offered by Mr. Benjamin Webster, then lessee of the Haymarket Theatre, for the best play. The author was the late Gilbert Abbott à Beckett, police magistrate and man of letters. My father expressed surprise that the scene should have appeared in the collection, as the play had evidently been written with a view to modern requirements. So from this I take it that half a century ago "the painted ship upon a painted ocean," "the bookcase in oils on a background of distemper," were becoming obsolete. The "tea cup and saucer" drama was coming to the fore in the forties, to arrive at perfection a score of years later. So much for the details of interiors.

The first broad effects of outdoor life were reached in the great realistic revival when Andrew Halliday showed a hansom cab for the first time on the boards of Old Drury. The lessee was the late Mr. Chatterton, and the name of the play was *The Great City*. It was produced as nearly as possible thirty years ago, and the heroine was Miss Madge Robertson, subsequently to become famous as Mrs. Kendal. I was a dramatic critic (a very youthful one) in those far-off days, and I remember with what delight the pit—and if it comes to that, the stalls too—received the familiar "gondola of the London streets." We had been immensely pleased at seeing the toll-keeper's box at the entrance to Waterloo Bridge, and when the real hansom drove up our enthusiasm knew no bounds. The success of the incident gave a hint to the late Dion Boucicault, who had tried "sensationalism" in another direction in *The Colleen Bawn*, and ten years afterwards we had at the Princess's Theatre all kinds of real things. Now it was a real fire, now a real train, now a real snowstorm.

The mention of the name of the clever adapter of *The Collegians* reminds me that I was present at the first representation in London of the famous "cave scene," and also what I believe (for the present at least) must have been the last. When *The Colleen Bawn* was produced at the Adelphi, the lessee was that same Benjamin Webster who years before had rented the Haymarket. Dion Boucicault had written *Janet Pride* and other famous dramas for the Strand house, but had long been away in America. He had produced a terrible play, called *The Vampire*, for the Princess's, under Charles Kean's management, and then had migrated, taking with him that accomplished lady who still by bearing it adds honour to his name. *The Colleen Bawn* was accepted by Webster on sharing terms. Until then a successful dramatist had been content to receive £100 an act for a play—

not so very little after all, when it is remembered that in those days the playwright merely translated a French play into English. It will be remembered that Nicholas Nickleby was the stock author of Mr. Crummles' company, and that the eminent parent of the no less eminent "Infant Prodigy" once declared that he had half a mind to insist upon all his employés understanding the Gallic tongue, so that they might translate the original into the British as they went on at rehearsal. He explained that his idea was suggested by reasons of economy, as, were it possible to carry the notion into effect, he would be able to dispense with the services of an additionally-paid adapter. Some of the original cast are still living. Mrs. Dion Boucicault was the original Eily, Mr. John Billington the first English Cregan (the play was produced in the United States before its appearance at the Adelphi), Mrs. Billington was the Mrs. Cregan, and Miss Woolgar (Mrs. Alfred Mellon) Anne Chute. Then there were Dion himself for Miles, and Falconer (who wrote *The Peep o' Day* for the Lyceum) as Danny Man. The great hit of the play was the cave scene, in which Eily was thrown into the water, and then, after floating about in the gauze, was saved by her peasant lover. The excitement was immense, and I shall never forget the hush of expectation when for a moment or two the stage was empty, during the pause following Danny's slaughter, and the arrival of Miles to see what had become of the presumably potted otter. The house was eager for the rescue of Eily, who was supposed to be floating beneath the water. Then there was a thunder of applause when Miles discovered his darling, took a header, was seen in various parts of the stage striking out, and ultimately climbed up a rock in the centre, bearing his Colleen, and bathed in the limelight. A short time since there was a tank at the Princess's Theatre, and it occurred to the spirited management that *The Colleen Bawn* might be revived, so that the cave scene might be played with the additional advantage of real water. I then saw Eily drenched, and Miles taking headers in real genuine aqua—more or less pura. I can honestly say that the first version with the gauze was more effective than the water with its real splashes. The water was very wet, but it was not nearly so convincing as the calico. In my humble opinion, by the introduction of real water, "realism" was overdone. Something must be left to the imagination, and something must be sacrificed to the exigencies of stage effect. It is no easy thing to introduce a looking-glass on the stage. If it be a real one, unless great care is taken it will reveal objects that should be out of sight of the audience. Sometimes it is soaped over to destroy its powers of reflection. If a gauze mirror is shown, a backing occasionally is introduced

to pictorially represent the objects supposed to be reflected. But the best way of setting a glass is with its back turned towards the audience; then, if there is any important effect produced, the attention of the audience is not distracted from the central figure. For instance, in *The Isle of St. Tropez* (a capital adaptation from the French by F. C. Burnand and the late Montagu Williams), Alfred Wigan used to be poisoned by George Vining. The first saw the last pouring out the fatal draught reflected in a looking-glass. The mirror was set with its back to the audience.

The popularity of realism on the stage has cost the managers many a fortune. Nowadays, a temple, a church, a castle must be actually built on the stage. The back-cloth and a cut-out piece or two in front are voted out of date. But were they not as effective as the more solid work of the present moment? I venture to think they were. Of course, when a piece is to run for months, it may be for years, and I think I may add (with a view to *Charley's Aunt*) it may be for ever, the management can afford the most elaborate realism. When *H.M.S. Pinafore* and *Patience* were played at the Savoy, the ship came to stay for any length of time, and the House of Commons had the longest of long sessions. But cloths might perhaps have been sufficient for their successors, *Utopia Limited* and *The Grand Duke*. But leaving the question of expense entirely out of the matter, are real doors, real fire-places, real columns, and real trees essential to a successful set? I do not think so. A stage face requires rouge and paste to stand the glare of the footlights, and distemper can be easier adapted to that same glare than glass and crockery. So, if the public get tired of too much realism, it will not, in my modest judgment, be disastrous from either a financial or an artistic point of view if the managers are forced to show them "sumut else."

GOUNOD'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

By the Baroness von Zedlitz.

UNDER the modest title of *Memoirs of an Artist*, a very charming and interesting book has been brought out in Paris, and one cannot fail deeply to deplore the fact that its illustrious author, Charles Gounod, is no longer with us to be the recipient of the commendation the world would fain offer him on reading his work. We have been accustomed to think of Gounod purely in the light of a musician. On reading his memoirs, which, apart from their charm of style, teem with a wealth of information, we feel that this characterization is far too

illiberal a one to apply to him. As a literary genius, Gounod may be said to rank beside that other great musical writer, Berlioz. Like most Frenchmen, he adored his mother, and looked up to her with a veneration which is touchingly alluded to in the opening pages. One of the chief charms of the autobiography lies in the bright glimpses the author is wont to give us now and then of his own engaging personality.

Gounod's early predisposition towards music are characteristically described. Of his first visit to the Théâtre Italien, in Paris, to hear Rossini's *Othello*, he says: "We were obliged to stand in a line in the hope of securing two pit seats, in itself a grave expense for my poor, dear mother. It was bitterly cold, and for nearly two hours my brother and I waited, with frozen feet, for the moment we were so ardently expecting. I shall never forget the impression made upon me by the sight of that hall, that curtain, and the general brilliancy of the scene. It seemed as though I found myself in a temple, and that something divine was about to be revealed to me. The supreme moment arrives. We hear the customary three raps; the overture is about to commence; my heart beats as though it must burst. . . That performance was a rapturous transport, a delirium. Malibran Rubini, Lablache, Tamburini (who played Iago), were the artists. Those voices, that orchestra, all combined to drive me literally crazy."

His teachers were Reicha, and after his death, Cherubini. Antoine Reicha, a German musician who enjoyed a high reputation theoretically, was attached to the Conservatoire (of which Cherubini was then director), as professor of composition. Gounod's mother, a most excellent and large-hearted lady, was anxious about her beloved son's future, for she feared that he did not possess the requisite energy to surmount the obstacles incident to an artistic career. She took the little fellow to Reicha, and confided him to the musician's care, with the following cautious advice: "I have brought my son to you against my will, dear master, for I am afraid of an artistic career for him, knowing, as I do, with what difficulties such a life is surrounded. On the other hand, I do not wish to place my boy in the position of being able to reproach me some day with having impeded his progress, and with having stood between him and happiness. First of all, I want to assure myself that his inclinations are real, and that his vocation is solid. Put him to the serious test of accumulating difficulties before him, which, if he is really fit to become an artist, will not repulse him, and which he will be in a position to overcome. If, on the contrary, he allows himself to be discouraged, I shall know what to do, and shall certainly not permit

him to enter upon a career the first obstacles of which he would be incapable of dealing with." According to his narrative, the young enthusiast was subjected to many trying ordeals, out of which, however, he came triumphantly, by reason, no doubt, of his stability, energetic perseverance, and his strict adherence to his studies.

At the age of twenty, Gounod carried off the Grand Prix de Rome, a distinction rarely conferred upon so young a student. Now his triumphs were coming upon him thick and fast, for he wrote a mass before going to Rome. It was performed at St. Eustache, and conducted by himself, to the intense enjoyment of the congregation. It is interesting to note that, although this book shines with undisguised self-appreciation throughout, the author is ever anxious to dilate upon his mother's unselfish and loving care for her son. Speaking of the afore-mentioned important work he says: "I had five months before me, and I set myself resolutely to my task at a specific date. I was quite ready to begin, thanks to the loving kindness of my mother, who had valiantly helped me to copy the orchestral parts, since our small means did not permit of our engaging a copyist. A *grand orchestral mass*, if you please! I dedicated the same with profound gratitude, not unmixed with trepidation, to the memory of my dear and deeply mourned master, Le Sueur, and conducted the work personally at St. Eustache."

In 1839 Gounod left Paris for Italy. His first impressions of Rome were so unfavourable, so utterly unlike what he had pictured to himself, that the grave, austere city chilled his senses, and impressed him coldly and sadly. During the first few days after his arrival in Rome, he abandoned himself completely to melancholy, and was on the point several times of renouncing his pension, packing his portmanteau, and returning to Paris, and to those dearest to him in the world. The serene majesty and beauties of Rome, however, soon unfolded themselves to his sensitive nature, and as he gradually became familiar with the city, the profound silence of which had, at first, impressed him as that of a desert, he grew charmed with his picturesque surroundings, and even derived an intense delight from frequenting the Forum, the ruins of Palatin, and the Coliseum. Another mass was composed during this period at Rome, for the Saint Louis-des-Français church, and at the age of twenty-two, Gounod was again distinguished, this time by being nominated "Maître de Chapelle honoraire à vie" to the above-named church.

When Gounod completed his term of study at Rome, he went to Berlin and thence to Leipzig, where he made the acquaintance of Mendelssohn, by whom he was received with a cordiality that

made a deep impression upon him. A charming incident occurred on the occasion of Gounod's first visit to Mendelssohn's house. The Frenchman, with no little trepidation, sat down to the piano and played one of his compositions, *Dies iræ*, to the illustrious German musician. "He placed his hand on a quintette," says Gounod, "and said, 'My friend, that composition might have been signed by Cherubini.' From him I received the most precious words of approval and encouragement. I have only mentioned this one gracious acknowledgment because I am too proud of it ever to forget it. Such words from such a man are real distinctions, to be worn with infinitely more pride than one does actual decorations. . ."

The origin of *Sapho* is also interesting. Gounod was visiting Madame Viardot in 1849, when that great singer had reached the summit of her triumphs. They had spent several hours at the piano together, and the lady suddenly asked him why he did not compose an opera. Gounod replied that it would be easy enough to compose the music if he could only find a suitable text. He added that he had known Augier as a boy, but that the latter, as he had grown celebrated, might consider it a presumption on a young musician's part to address him on the subject. Madame Viardot urged him not to lose a moment, and to tell Augier that if he would write the libretto she would sing the principal *rôle*. No sooner said than done. Augier consented with delight, and the story of *Sapho* was the selected subject. The work was forthwith undertaken, with the result that it was performed at the Grand Opéra in Paris in 1851. On that memorable night, Gounod met Berlioz in the lobby of the theatre, his face bathed in tears. Gounod threw his arm round his friend's neck and cried: "Oh, my dear Berlioz, come and show those tear-stained eyes to my mother; they contain the most beautiful criticism she will ever read on my work."

Ulysse was performed in 1852, a few days after Gounod had married a Miss Zimmermann, daughter of the famous pianist. He was almost immediately nominated Director of the *Orphéon* and instructor of singing in various schools in Paris. He performed his new functions for eight years, and this, possibly, exercised a happy influence over his musical career. *La Nonne Sanglante*, *Le Médecin Malgré Lui*, and *Faust* are the next works he speaks of in his memoirs. *Faust*, which was performed in 1859, he designates as having been his greatest success, although musical history tells us unhesitatingly that it did not meet with enthusiasm in Paris at its production. With some interesting remarks touching on the respective parts of Marguerite, Faust, and Mephistopheles, the Gounod autobiography closes. At the end of

the book an interesting correspondence is given between Gounod and one or two intimate friends, beside several bright essays of good literary and critical quality, treating, entr'autres, of Berlioz and others.

What the great artist says of music and musicians should be carefully perused by artist readers, and all lovers of elegant literature. The work throughout teems with warm, human feeling, and is raised to the level of a classic by reason of its intensely exalted style. His worship of Mozart was displayed at a very tender age, and was faithfully maintained until the day of his death, while the engaging freedom and delicacy with which he deals with his subjects should be carefully "marked, learnt, and inwardly digested." As a specimen of his style I will give one more quotation. He is speaking of matters literary, and in one delightful discussion he terms words "docile and faithful servants of thought," and states their duty to be to "lead one on to the summit without rude shock—mysterious guides who conceal both themselves and their methods."

THE ART OF SELF-ADVERTISEMENT.

By an Ex-Professor.

I AM permitted to offer to the readers of this magazine a foretaste of the book I am at present engaged upon, and which I hope to publish early in the autumn. So far as I know, the subject with which it deals has never been handled with the breadth and fullness which its manifest importance demands, and I feel confident, therefore, that my little volume is destined to supply a long-felt want. I need only state that the work will be published at the price of one guinea net, and that I shall be pleased to receive orders, accompanied by remittances, at any time and from any quarter.

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Having conclusively shown, as I flatter myself I have done in the earlier chapters of this book, how important to the members of the medical, political, and clerical professions is the art of self-advertisement, I now proceed to deal with the subject as it concerns the theatrical world. And, by way of preface, I make bold to assert, what, indeed, must be patent to every unprejudiced observer, that, as regards popularity and influence, no profession is more dependent upon the exercise of this art than that which holds imperious sway behind the scenes. It is no part of my purpose to trace the history of those who, starting from a humble

origin, have at length won for themselves, in society and out of it, a position it is now the fashion to describe as both enviable and honourable. By what means that remarkable feat has, in face of the gravest opposition and difficulty, been accomplished is, on the other hand, a perfectly legitimate subject for inquiry. Cleverness, ingenuity, talent, and ability have doubtless served as powerful aids to the attainment of this desirable end, yet how ineffective and impotent must all these qualities have proved had they not been backed up and reinforced by the noble art of self-advertisement. Clearly, therefore, it behoves everyone anxious to secure distinction on the boards to study and to master a science without some knowledge of which even genius itself must fail to obtain the full measure of recognition rightly due to it.

Let me begin, accordingly, by counselling the youthful actor to discard whatever modicum of modesty nature may have endowed him with. Of course there are occasions when a slight display of bashfulness is not only proper but politic. With these, however, I shall deal at length in my next chapter. For the moment it is sufficient to remember that the world is only too ready to accept a man at his own valuation, and that to underestimate one's own powers is to stand confessed a person of no discrimination. Nevertheless, the actor would do well to consider that in this respect much more may be effected by subtle suggestion than by actual assertion. Boldly to declare that you are the greatest comedian or tragedian on the stage is simply to court disaster for yourself. Yet, by a careful process of elimination you may arrive at the same conclusion without incurring any risk of contradiction. Of course, it does not logically follow because you have shown Brown, Jones, and Robinson to be incompetent artists that you yourself are a fellow of transcendent genius. Still, the inference is fairly clear. Never forget that, carefully employed, detraction of others is one of the first and most powerful principles of the art of self-advertisement.

As the actor grows in years, he will naturally seek to extend the scope of his operations. The limited circle of friends and relations was, if I may use the expression, speedily squared; it now remains for him to attempt the conquest of vaster and more important spheres. Of these the most considerable and the most difficult of mastery are society and the press. To secure the favour of the first, good looks, a pleasant manner, and a persuasive tongue will help greatly. Add to those virtues untiring readiness to assist in promoting the noble cause of charity. This, I may observe, can and ought on principle to be done with no expense, although with infinite credit to yourself. For it is to be noticed that the really great masters of the art of self-advertisement deem it a

point of honour that the science shall be practised without any pecuniary loss on their part. To sing a trumpery little ballad (half-a-guinea should on such occasions be exacted from the publishers), deliver a monologue, or prove your ancestry by mimicking one or two popular actors, will obtain for you as much fame, or at least notoriety, as a cheque for twenty pounds. It need hardly be said that an essential condition of your co-operation is that you name shall be widely advertised and industriously announced, and that it shall be accorded equal prominence to that of any other artist figuring in the programme. In this way you secure a double advantage, for not only do you gain for yourself a reputation as a charitable person, but you also establish a distinct claim upon the goodwill of those to whom you have lent your services. And when at length you reach the summit of your ambition, and become an actor-manager, you will discover what a truly admirable and glorious thing it is to possess a society following.

A task of much greater difficulty presents itself when the actor makes his bid for the favour of the press. Twenty or thirty years ago it was generally held that the magic words "chicken and champagne" were a sufficient passport to the affections of any journalist. But I notice with sincere regret that of recent times members of that profession have developed a disagreeable spirit of independence and of indifference to the friendly overtures made to them from various quarters. Some are even disposed to pride themselves upon a propensity to speak the truth in or out of season, forgetful of the circumstance that, while a plain statement is within the compass of any fool, it requires a really clever man so to manipulate fiction as to give it the appearance of perfect truth. Luckily, vanity enters so largely into the composition of such persons that, cautiously approached, their capitulation is almost certain. Suppose, then, that an actor has been ruthlessly slated by one of those cantankerous persons, the best thing he can do is to indite to the critic a prettily-worded letter expressing the writer's gratitude for the interest shown in his performance, along with the declaration of his fixed intention to profit by the kindly suggestions contained in the notice. By this means he at once establishes himself as a *protégé* of the critic in question, who must be more than human if he refuses for the future to father this monster of his own creation. Nor can an actor in his exercise of the art of self-advertisement afford to overlook the services of the preliminary paragraphist, who, however, is a person much more easy of approach than the regular critic. Indeed, so well understood is this that it is perhaps hardly necessary for me to enter upon the point at any length. One

little hint, I may, however, offer to the novice anxious to see his name in print. Greedy as he may be for news, no paragraphist of established position will avail himself of a stereotyped communication. Be careful, therefore, that in every case the formula is varied. Thus, if in one instance you describe yourself as "that talented young actor," remember in the next to refer to "the clever and rising artist," Mr. So-and-So. Moreover, by such means you are likely to impress the public with the belief that while there is absolute unanimity of opinion among the critics regarding your merits, any idea of inspiration or collusion is dissipated by the entirely different manner each has of saying practically the same thing.

Having thus discussed in broad outline the pregnant question of the art of self-advertisement as it affects the theatrical profession, I now proceed to consider the matter in greater detail. But as this chapter has already reached a sufficient length, I must reserve for my next a closer analysis and more minute examination of the subject.

CRITICISM IN THE PROVINCES.

By Douglas Ginaodh.

ONCE it was my fortune, or otherwise, to become dramatic critic on a provincial paper in one of our most important cities. Our paper was above the average of its kind, and one of the oldest journals in the whole country. The editor, too, was above the average of his kind. I was myself fresh from the study of various matters that might help a man to go to the circle with some confidence. Nay, I had come with a philosophical definition of the thing Drama, and, what was more, I had deduced therefrom a standard of dramatic estimation under which I could review almost anything on the dramatic stage, from *Hamlet* to *Muldoon's Pic-Nic*. Indeed, the only thing that ever failed me was *The Sign of the Cross*, which I could not possibly fit into any single category in my definition, and which, therefore, caused me some sorrow, especially in view of my respect for its author, apart from dramatic authorship. I was not able to find any true dramatic art in the staging of ready-made Christianity, or in the turning of the pulpits, and the preachers, and the historians into theatrical advertising agencies. This was before *The Sign of the Cross* had yet reached London, and my faith in my definition was not diminished by seeing afterwards how it was regarded by the serious students of the drama in the capital. Nor did the subsequent success of that

play alter my estimate of it any more than I should abandon demonstrable truth to pursue any other public misconception. Seriously, I had approached the drama in real ernest, neglecting neither the work of men like Lessing and Hazlitt, nor the new developments of the British drama. Nor have my subsequent experiences done otherwise than strengthen my confidence in the definition and the standard with which I started.

But soon difficulties presented themselves. When a thing was obviously very bad, I said it was obviously very bad, and generally showed reasons why, instead of saying that "it might be better," as my brothers around on the Press constantly expressed their more experienced instinct. There seemed to be good and bad in most things, and it seemed important to illustrate the distinctions. But talking of the bad was considered not "business," and unless I could talk of both, how could I make clear the distinctions between them? Soon there came along a funny melodrama, with the heavy villain "in the hands" of Mr. Terence—but let him rest. Well, I said of Terence that he must have ability of some kind to have got on the stage at all in face of his awful acting, but he appreciated the compliment by calling at our office with a terrible scowl on his face and a corresponding stick in his hand. I was not in.

It was then that my real troubles began. My dear editor told me that he would have to protect "artists" from me. I only replied that he had not seen Terence act. He was angry, however, and that was our first row. After this he became suspicious of my severity, and could never wholly trust me with melodramatic villains. He must have been the kindest man that ever lived, for I never made him really happy except when I praised, and the more I praised everything and everybody the more happy I made him. It was an additional inducement to me to be kind to all things, for I liked my editor, and I think he liked me whenever there happened an interval between our quarrels. His great hope was that, with "training and supervision," such as he could afford me, I would one day become an excellent critic. But, alas! we could not agree as to What Drama Was. I would suggest that, in writing on a subject, it was as well to keep in view some intelligible idea of the subject. Therefore, I would expound my definition to him, while he listened with the look of a hungry man waiting for the end of a sermon. After which he would observe that it would be better were I to "try and learn my business." This was his invariable ultimatum, and if ever I ventured further in order to show that "learning my business" had some connection with the question of What Drama Was, he cut me short with strong words. Up to a point,

he was a patient man, and would argue; after this point he put down his editorial foot, and would have me know that "learning my business" consisted in doing as he told me. I must write nice paragraphs, just the right length and character to suit the theatrical managers for quotation, so as to advertise our paper. This was another part of "my business" at which I was very unsatisfactory. In fact, I never did it. Thus we laboured on, and I think the editor suffered as much as myself, for he considered it no small part of his duty to "protect" the artists, the theatres, and the public from my definitions and my methods. It is all over now, and I shall not cease to think with gratitude on the patience, the indulgence, and the blue pencil with which he nearly broke my heart. He had his readers and his advertisements to consider, beside several other deep concerns that were then beyond me; and it was no doubt as difficult for him to fit a person like myself into the system as it was for me to adapt myself to the situation. Obviously there was nothing for it but to put my definitions and standards into the background or give up the work. I stuck to the work. In a few months a fair amount of harmony was established. I had learnt the stock phrases and the stock "wrinkles." I had achieved the glorious aim of writing without displeasing anybody. My editor congratulated me on the improvement in my work; I sighed over the deterioration in it, and ceased to feel any enthusiasm regarding the rubbish to which it descended more and more as it went on "improving." At the end of a year, I had become quite "successful" as a critic, but hardly anything I wrote could properly bear the name of criticism. I have all the articles before me now, and those I wrote at the beginning, before I had "learnt my business," are vastly the best, from every point of view. I do not blame the editor; he worked to the conditions that governed him. I do not blame the proprietors; they can be trusted to know what is essential to the success of their paper. I do not blame myself; my fitness for the work was admittedly not below the average. For the present, I blame nothing, but desire to describe and suggest the state of dramatic criticism in the provinces. On another occasion I shall go into questions of cause and effect.

Our city has one of the very largest theatres in the whole country, and the manager of it is a man whose impression of local criticism is worth listening to. Here is the substance of his opinion, given to me one night in the place:—"There is no real criticism in this city. We are all sick and disgusted with incessant and unconditional praise. It may be kind, but it does us no good, and it does certain injury to the drama. We would rather have our faults pointed out to us with courtesy and judg-

ment. That would be a benefit to all concerned. As it is, the papers have scarcely ever a criticism worth reading. The public are intelligent enough to see through the whole sham, and cannot have any faith in opinions that are uniformly flattering and never critical. When everything is praise, how can the public ascertain from the newspapers what is worth seeing or what is not?" A provincial critic who represents one of the most prosperous and influential daily papers in the United Kingdom once expressed himself to me as follows :—"Don't get it into your head that what I write in the *Daily* ——— has any necessary connection with my own opinions. I work on an altogether different plan. I go to the theatre, and do my best to realise what the average number of the audience thinks of the play. This is what I write, and the next day, when the average reader picks up my work, he declares me a very clever fellow. You know the best of us are liable to consider people clever, because they happen to see things as we do. The average playgoer, always common-place, thinks that my common-places are my real views, and it is to this I attribute any success that I have had in dramatic criticism." I could give such illustrations indefinitely.

The travelling manager and the advance agent are personages who cannot be neglected in any full description of dramatic criticism in the provinces. What sheets of foolscap I have received from them! A favourite plan of theirs is to send a "forward notice" of their play, describing its irresistible power and unprecedented superiority in the most flatteringly exaggerated superlatives. According to this "notice," no such grand thing ever came to our city before or is ever likely to come again. Accompanying the "notice," which is intended, with other attractions, to save us the trouble of writing one, there comes an eloquently ambiguous letter, which may bear any of these three interpretations:—(1) "I write you a description of our play, and it may help you to fill up your space and save you trouble. (2) If you publish it as a criticism, I shall pay you for it at extra rates as an advertisement. (3) In either case, I shall give you a number of free passes to the theatre during the performance." The letter winds up by saying that the writer will call at a certain hour next day, and sure enough he turns up. I was much interested the first time I met one of these gentlemen. Punctually, and perfectly dressed, he came into my room, placed himself in a chair, and proceeded to talk in the most pleasant manner, while at the same time doing his best to take my measure. At first I talked in such a manner as to encourage him, taking care to express myself in an ambiguously safe manner. By the time he thought that he had found the right man, I expressed my regret

at not being able to oblige him. "Why?" "Because it was a fraud upon the public," I replied, "and because I did not care to add to my extensive sins by deliberately committing a fraud." "But other papers do it; see, for example, the——" I did not want to hear of any paper doing it, and my visitor dropped his under jaw, ceased twiddling his gold chain, picked up his silk hat, closed the lowest button on his beautiful frock coat, and left the room. I knew I was safe in so acting in the editor's absence, for he was a man above anything so corrupt. Week after week we had similar proposals from these gentry, and I do not know why we should have received them so often, unless some newspapers at least were in the habit of acting upon them. In which case, I take it, dramatic agents and managers sometimes write the "criticism" that appears in some of the provincial newspapers.

Another favourite recipe of the advance agent and manager is gooseberry champagne, pungent and sparkling, and so like the real article that it often produces the desired effect. The reporter-critic who goes to the play in the evening after a hard day's work is not sorry to meet kindness and wine, though I do not think that, as a whole, the reporters are unconscientious, even when they have drunk the gooseberry liquid. The great misfortune is that they are sent there as critics at all. Their lives are so hurried and hard-worked that they cannot possibly be good critics, especially when they are sent to do the work after having done a day's work already.

It is plain, notwithstanding, that theatrical criticism, like every other department of journalism, has improved considerably in the provinces, and is still improving. From which I conclude that it must have been in a very bad way, rather than that it is now in a good way. There are a few papers in the provinces in which dramatic criticism is generally well done; indeed, much better done than in some London papers, especially those in which so much elaborate talent is devoted to the interpretation of the common-place. But on the whole, provincial criticism is a sadly insufficient thing, hampered by various limitations that ought to be removed. In another article I shall deal with some of those imitations.

SHOULD DEADHEADS LIVE?

By H. Chance Newton.

THE above is a question which might well commend itself to more than one theatrical manager—or group of managers—on what might Hibernically be described as the threshold

of a new season. Especially should they consider this question —and answer it in the negative—if their desire be to make money, which is generally the be-all and end-all of theatre-runners, whether the finances they risk be their own or—as is (happily for *them*) often the case nowadays—someone else's.

There are many obvious reasons why the aforesaid question should be answered with an uncompromising *No!* In the first place your deadhead is indeed "ubiquitous," as the shrewd and sage Mechanic-Member for Battersea described him the other day at the stone-laying function in connection with the new local theatre, which—for the first time in London (as playbills say)—is to be named after a person by the name of Shakspere.

Ubiquitous? Ah yes—for to paraphrase the before-mentioned author—"Where's that Palace, or Playhouse, or Music Hall (I beg pardon, 'Theatre of Varieties'), whereinto foul things intrude not? Indeed, your deadhead stands not upon the 'order' of his going, but he goes at once whenever he can get 'paper.' Nay, he (and alas, even she) will commit almost any crime, and will certainly stoop to every kind of meanness and subterfuge, in order to secure free passes. Even clergymen when they imbibe a taste for playgoing—as they often do nowadays—are apt in this connection to regard 'Orders' as 'heaven's first law.'"

One does not so much object to the clergy going to the play when the seats are free, and there is no collection; for they are a notoriously underpaid class. Many a learned and diligent example thereof receives less salary per week than falls to the lot of a "utility" man at a transpontine theatre. Nor can one reasonably complain of "artistes" having a card—or countenance—entry to the playhouses; for what 'busman ever expects to be asked for his fare when he spends his holiday on his fellow-worker's 'bus? Besides, the actor is (unlike most deadheads) "a good audience," and applauds, as the shrewd De Mauprat did at the Cardinal's play, in the proper places, always, of course, supposing that the said actor is not talking about himself or of his own "creations" —as occasionally happens.

But there are many dire and dreadful kinds of deadheads, and they may perhaps for better purposes of identification be thus classified :—

The well-to-do tradesman deadhead, who never would and never will, pay to go to a mere play; but who would regard as a member of the dangerous classes anyone who might hint that he should dispense his butter, his eggs, or his pound of cheese gratis. How on earth he imagines that the poor player is ever to become richer, or to find food and clothing, or to afford even a Salvation

Army Shelter at night, or even to live, of course never enters his business-like brain-pan. This kind of deadhead does not even give the theatre bars a chance. Therein, however, often is his state the more gracious. No, he will run even his refreshing needs on a "pass out check," and will, for choice, borrow someone's programme.

Per contra, there is the butterfly kind of deadhead, who flits from theatre to theatre, by means of these "paper" wings and does not care how much he spends in the saloons with any official who may have bestowed a free pass upon him ever and anon. If these passes be for two, or if his card is good for that number, his spirituous or vinous gratitude increases in proportionate ratio, as such favours cast (he thinks) much glamour over him in the eyes of the friend who accompanies him. This sort of deadhead will often also bestow frequent presents of some value upon the acting manager who thus favours him; and will, in short, spend anything in any possible manner—except to add one solitary mite to some poor devil of a manager's depleted "treasury." N.B.—This kind of deadhead is very common just now in certain variety theatres—and places where they shout—and is quite a godsend to the bars and to the acting and assistant acting managers; who, like the good old music hall "chairmen" of the past, never need pay for their "drinks" and "smokes."

The next specimen that will occur to you is one which, of course, should be mentioned with bated breath and whispering humbleness—namely, the Press (or journalistic) deadhead. There is no need to write a paragraph about it in Gath, or to publish it (in several editions) in Ascalon; but as a matter of fact—and strictly between ourselves—this kind of deadhead is often a fearful wildfowl. Marry, how? Tropically, indeed, for he is sometimes a very "warm member." I do not, of course, include that species of Press-deadheads, who, paragraphically and critically, more than repays, in advertisement for the couple of stalls or the little box they may from time to time request. Nor do I, of course, refer to those journalists whose business it is to accept managerial invitations on first nights. No; the kind of Press-deadhead I mean is the one who is always writing in, or presenting a card from, the *Southwark Slushtub*, with which is incorporated the *Newington Knowall;* the *Laundry Latherer and Shirt-Ironer's Standard;* the *Half Soler and Heeler, or the Boot-binder's Budget;* the *Matabele Muddler* (London correspondent, Mr.——), and such-like important organs.

It is this kind of deadhead, who, when he has once got his "pass"—and he is never happy till he does get it—does not care a whitesmith's imprecation whether he uses it or not. He does

not even take the trouble to give the seats away, but leaves them open all the night, much to the fury of the manager, who, even if he could not have sold them, might have "obliged" someone of more account. Now, of all kind of theatrical worriers, the deadhead who leaves his seat empty, is the one most deserving of guillotining; for what is more depressing to kind friends in front, or more disturbing to the players, than to note great gaps of audienceless seats all over the place?

Then, again, there is the lofty (or Government Office) deadhead, who begs seats from certain newspaper offices, and offers to write gratis notices for the same! When his offer is accepted, and—however it may surprise you to learn it—it sometimes *is*, the arrangement enables Mr. Government Official and Mrs. G. O. to pose as first-night "fashionables" and "brilliants," and to hold little conversaziones in the stalls—selecting (for choice) the time when some question of the play is to be considered.

Of course, no one with any of the finer feelings would complain of the pit and upper circle deadhead, whose free pass is often a *quid pro quo* for exhibiting playbills of the house; or who may even be a landlady or other humble creditor whom some poor or too long "resting" player cannot otherwise satisfy *pro tem.* These deadheads deserve all they can get in the way of free admissions. But, on the whole, as the foregoing remarks may serve to show, the common or cadging deadhead is really an unnecessary evil; for although he may help to make a show of "good business" he (or she) is usually the most discontented of mortals. These "order" cravers are never so satisfied as those that pay, and they are seldom heard to recommend a show; which *should* be the desire of most deadheads. They seldom or never give a "hand" to the play or players, or have a good word for the management. Perhaps the only use some such deadheads (see Commercial Stock Exchange and similar specimens) have, is once a year to take tickets for the benefit of some acting-manager, who (haply with an eye to this) has kept them well "papered" during the last twelvemonths. Thus to prepare, in "order"-ly fashion for such an annual event, is one of the best marks of an astute business manager.

FELONS ON THE STAGE.

By Arthur Escott.

THE announcement that Mr. Joseph Hatton has prepared a new dramatic version of *Jack Sheppard*, and that Mr. Weedon Grossmith is about to produce it at a west-end theatre, may not have been received with a feeling of unmixed satisfaction.

Many friends of the stage will ask whether its best interests are advanced by the reintroduction upon it of a vulgar malefactor, presumably in a more or less romantic light. Perhaps, too, they may ask whether we still have an Examiner of Plays, as it has been one of the unwritten laws at the Lord Chamberlain's Office for nearly half a century that the Sheppards and the Turpins shall not be seen at theatres within the limits of his jurisdiction. In this case, however, there is little or no room for misgivings on the part of those who rightly object to the presentation of criminals on the stage under an alluring aspect. Mr. Hatton has handled his subject in a mood befitting the refined novelist, essayist, journalist, and dramatist. He has no idea of making Sheppard a hero. His *Idle Apprentice*, as the play is called, is anything but of a sordid character. Inspired by Hogarth, he seeks to paint a picture of London life in the time of George I., with such an atmosphere of romance as will lift the story out of the gutter, or, if the story should stray gutterwards, to "reflect the sun in the puddle," as we have it in Dickens. For the background we shall have glimpses of the first Jacobite rising, the South Sea Bubble, and the rest. It was an age of lawlessness, intrigue, and wild speculation, with pirates at sea and highwaymen on land. As many of us have heard, Jack Sheppard, the most daring of burglars and the most ingenious of prison-breakers, had his portrait painted by Sir James Thornhill, and was visited in Newgate by curious and not unsympathetic ladies of quality. Especially conspicuous in Mr. Hatton's scheme, we understand, is the figure of Jonathan Wild, who has usually figured in both drama and burlesque as a common-place ruffian, but who may be regarded as one of the most remarkable men of his day—patron saint of the highwayman and the cracksman, thief-taker in ordinary to the City, receiver of stolen goods, a diplomat among diplomats, living in high style, and at one time within an ace of receiving rare civic honours. The new play will be one on an old subject, which, however, has never been treated from its really best side.

It is a curious fact, not easily to be explained, that hardy and successful felons, whether under fictitious or real names, should always have proved attractive figures on the stage. Mr. Nisbet, the author of the far-reaching Handbook in the *Referee*, might well give us his views as to the problem here presented. How, for example, are we to account for the singular popularity of *The Beggars' Opera* in the eighteenth century? "This piece," says Samuel Johnson, quoting notes to the *Dunciad*, "was received with greater applause than was ever known. Besides being acted in London sixty-three nights without interruption, and

renewed the next season with equal applause, it spread into all the great towns of England—was played in many places to the thirtieth and fortieth time; at Bath and Bristol, &c., fifty. It made its progress into Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, where it was performed twenty-four days successively. The ladies carried about with them the favourite songs of it in fans, and houses were furnished with it in screens. The fame of it was not confined to the author only. The person who acted Polly"—Lavinia Fenton, afterwards Duchess of Bolton—"till then obscure, became all at once the favourite of the town; her pictures were engraved and sold in great numbers, her life written, books of letters and verses to her published, and pamphlets made even of her sayings and jests." No one who knows *The Beggars' Opera* requires to be told that, while a pleasant satire upon Italian opera, it owed nearly all this success to the presence of Captain Macheath. Frenchmen at the same period were no less delighted to see a robber on the stage. One evening in 1721, at the Théâtre Français, a *Cartouche* by Legrand, the actor-dramatist, was announced to follow a performance of Boursault's *Esope à la Cour*. Only a week had elapsed since the rascal's arrest, and his name was on every lip. "It may be doubted," we are told, "whether the promise of a newly discovered comedy by Molière would have aroused more general interest. Cries of 'Cartouche' were raised in the theatre as soon as the curtain had gone up for Boursault's polished comedy, and the players found themselves obliged to abandon the latter in favour of the afterpiece at the end of the first act. 'Imagine,' the *Mercure* groaned, 'what posterity will think of the taste of this age when it learns that *Cartouche* was preferred to *Esope à la Cour!*'" Passing into Germany many years later—I need not go further afield—we find *Die Räuber* thriving for reasons altogether apart from the genius it displayed, undeniable as that genius was.

It would be interesting to learn how many times the notorious thieves of the world—the Robin Hoods, the Duvals, the Sheppards, the Turpins, the Sixteen-string Jacks, the Têtenoires, the Vidocqs, the Dubosqs, the Schinderhannes, and the rest—have appeared on the stage. Sheppard, we take it, is easily at the head of the list. His escape from Newgate did more to captivate the popular imagination than Hood's generosity, Duval's courtesy, or Turpin's amazing ride from London to York. He had scarcely been turned off at Tyburn when Thurmond brought him on the stage at Drury Lane, and from that time until a few years ago he has figured in a variety of burlesques, farces, and serious dramas. Of these dramas, I need hardly say, the most

memorable was Buckstone's adaptation, brought out at the Adelphi in 1839, of Harrison Ainsworth's story. Mrs. Keeley, happily still with us, was an ideal Jack—sprightly, picturesque, and ready to profit by the gleams of humour and tenderness she found in the part. The success of the play was equal to that of the book, and that is not saying little. Murmurs as to the probable influence of such dramas on the minds of the young soon began to be heard, with the result that the authorities evinced a marked disinclination to favour any *Jack Sheppards* in future. On the question thus raised it is not very easy to arrive at a definite conclusion. Sir John Fielding, the police magistrate, held that the *Beggars' Opera* led to an increase of crime, while a distinguished prelate pointed to the immorality of allowing Macheath to go unpunished. *Die Räuber* is said to have perverted the taste and imagination of all young men in Germany. "The high-minded metaphysical chief, its hero, was so warmly admired that several raw students, longing to imitate a character they thought so noble, actually abandoned their homes and their colleges, and betook themselves to the forests and the wilds to levy contributions upon travellers. They thought that they would, like Moor, plunder the rich, deliver eloquent soliloquies to the setting sun or the rising moon, relieve the poor when they met them, and drink flasks of Rhenish with their free companions in rugged mountain passes, or in tents in the thicknesses of the forests. But a little experience wonderfully cooled their courage; they found that real every-day robbers were very unlike the conventional banditti of the stage, and that three months in prison, with bread and water for their fare, and damp straw to lie upon, were very well to read about by their own firesides, but not very agreeable to undergo in their own proper persons." In his old age, it may be noted, Ainsworth expressed regret that he had written *Jack Sheppard*, considerable though his pecuniary reward had been. Without wishing to see thieves on the stage, save in such circumstances as are supplied in *The Lyons Mail* and *Robert Macaire*, we think that the danger so apprehended is distinctly exaggerated, at least as far as the present is concerned. "Each change of many coloured life" may be depicted on the stage under certain well-recognised conditions. Mr. Hatton, at all events, will not, as we have said, seek to make Jack Sheppard a hero, and will deliver him in the end to the punishment he so richly deserves.

Portraits.

MR. JAMES FERNANDEZ.

FORTY years ago a favourite resort of the dramatic critics after the first performance of a new play was the old Edinburgh Castle tavern, opposite Somerset House. Probably the room in which they compared notes and wrote is gone now, with its high-backed compartments, its deep-coloured tables, its sanded floor, its odd sort of mantelpiece. In the centre of a group here one night in 1860 was John Oxenford, the most genial, learned, and experienced of all. He had just seen an adaptation at the Surrey of the *Woman in White*, and had much to say, in his hearty way, of the representation of the hero. "Walter Hartright," he wrote in *The Times*, "is played by a young actor named Fernandez, who has good natural qualifications and a thorough knowledge of melodramatic business, and has every appearance of being a rising man." Born at St. Petersburg in 1835, the recipient of this valued little pat on the shoulder had then been on the stage about seven years, and had already made himself remarked at the outlying theatres of London. After eight or nine years' more hard work, he found himself in a leading position at Liverpool, playing King James and Trapbois in Halliday's version of the *Fortunes of Nigel*. His progress had not escaped the notice of Chatterton, who engaged him for the Adelphi. Here he remained some time, chiefly as Claude Frolio in *Notre Dame*, Don Salluste to Fechter's *Ruy Blas*, and last, but not least, Newman Noggs in *Nickleby*. From the Adelphi he migrated to Drury Lane, there to play Fitzjames in *The Lady of the Lake*, Isaac of York in a revival of *Rebecca*, Christian in *England*, and Varney in *Amy Robsart*. From that time he has occupied a high and assured position on the London stage. Sir Henry Irving secured him to play Coitier in *Louis XI.*, Choppard in *The Lyons Mail*, the Friar in *Romeo and Juliet*, and Leonato in *Much Ado About Nothing*. Meanwhile he produced a striking effect as Gaspard in *Les Cloches de Corneville*. He supported Mr. Tree as Jean Torquénie in *The Village Priest*, Daniel Ives in *The Dancing Girl*, and the Ghost in *Hamlet*, and the recent failure of *Magda* at the Lyceum was not due to any short-comings in his most admirable impersonation of the father. Altogether, Mr. Fernandez has more than justified Oxenford's implied prediction. He is a truly fine actor, whether tested as to grasp of character, soundness of judgment, excellence of elocution, or practised skill.

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MR. JAMES FERNANDEZ.

At the Play.

IN LONDON.

Following the usual custom, managers have shown themselves extremely chary of producing their novelties during August, and even those presented have been delayed until the month was close to a termination. At the Comedy Theatre, Messrs. George D. Day and Allan Reed's amusing farce, *The Mummy*, which, recently tried at a *matinée*, was noticed in the July number of this magazine, has now been promoted to a place in the evening bill.

Love on Crutches.

A Comedy in Three Acts (based on a German piece by Henrich Stobitzer) by August in Daly. Produced at the Comedy Theatre, July 28.

Annis Austin	Miss Ada Rehan	Bells	Mr. Robert Shephard
Sydney Austin	Mr. Charles Richman	Eudoxia Quattles ..	Mrs. G. H. Gilbert
Guy Roverly	Mr. Sidney Herbert	Mrs. Margery Gwynn ..	Miss Sybil Carlisle
Dr. Epenetus Quattles..	Mr. James Lewis	Berta	Miss Helma Nelson
Mr. Bitteredge ..	Mr. Herbert Gresham	Netty	Miss Gerda Wisner
Podd	Mr. William Haseltine		

Slight and improbable as Mr. Daly's latest addition to his repertory is, it possesses, at any rate, the merits of a fairly interesting intrigue and of witty dialogue. The story, it is true, is beaten out to the last degree of tenuity, and in the final act the most obvious means are resorted to in order to fill out the picture to the required dimensions. But these defects are almost, if not entirely, swallowed up in the pleasure occasioned by witnessing Miss Ada Rehan in a part which, although it makes the slightest demand upon her higher powers, offers abundant scope for her talents as a comedian. *Love on Crutches* presents the amusing spectacle of a young couple who so successfully conceal their true feelings that within a few months of their marriage they mutually come to the conclusion that divorce, founded on incompatability of temper, is the only resource open to them. Meanwhile the husband, Sydney Austin, has, under the *nom de guerre* of Marius, written a novel which appeals so strongly to the sympathies of his wife Annis that, adopting the name of Diana, she enters upon a lengthy sentimental correspondence with the anonymous author. The result is jealousy on both sides. As in M. Sardou's first important work, a hunt after the incriminating epistles begins only to end in the discovery that husband and wife have been corresponding with each other. A revelation of their real feelings and aspirations is thus furnished, and a new basis provided for a happier future. Nothing could

be more delightful than Miss Rehan's acting in the part of Annis Austin. Disdain of her prosaic spouse and admiration for her unknown affinity were expressed with a brightness and buoyancy altogether admirable, while the quick transitions from anger to sentiment, from tears to laughter, were accomplished in a manner to proclaim the born comedian. As Sydney Austin, Mr. Charles Richman confirmed the good impression already made by him, and clearly proved that when practice and experience have brought greater lightness of touch he may be expected to ripen into a valuable artist. Mr. Sidney Herbert, who constantly recalled Mr. Bancroft in his early days, gave an exceedingly clever sketch of a jealous lover, while Mr. James Lewis and Mrs. Gilbert, whose abilities this season have been only too poorly employed, reappeared in parts in which they have been seen again and again.

In Sight of St. Paul's.

An original Drama in Five Acts by Sutton Vane. Produced at the Princess's Theatre, August 1.

Mr. Chichester .. .. Mr. Story Gofton	A Chelsea Pen ioner .. Mr. Thomas Kean
Tom Chichester .. Mr. Ernest Leicester	A Greenwich Pensioner.. .. Mr. S. Foley
Harry Chichester .. Mr. George Hippisley	A Drummer Boy .. Master George Yates
John Gridston .. Mr. Austin Melford	Cynthia Dell .. Miss Keith Wakeman
Fretley Burnsides.. Mr. Walter Howard	Beatrice Moreland .. Miss Alice Yorke
Gillie Fletcher .. .. Mr. Lyston Lyle	The Countess Fellstar .. Miss Flora Wills
Dennis Sheridan .. .. .. Mr. A. Rymon	Mrs. Burlington March .. Miss Mary Bates
David Treacher .. .. Mr. Harry Cane	Lady Snow.. .. .. Miss Lily Gordon
Jim Palfrey.. .. Mr. Herbert Vyvyan	Rose .. ..Miss Winifred Lang
Inspector Clarkson Mr. Gerald Kennedy	Becky Vetch .. Miss Florrie Millington
Prescott .. .. .. Mr. Chris. Walker	Gracie Chichester Miss Sydney Fairbrother
Amos.. .. ..Mr. C. Astley	Aileen Millar .. .. Miss Kate Tyndall

An out-and-out melodrama of the class to which Mr. Sutton Vane's belongs defies alike description and criticism within the limits of these pages. To expect from the author of such a work either originality of idea or probability of action would be as unreasonable as to look for roses in winter or the sun at midnight. All that is required of him is that he shall provide an unbroken series of sensation scenes, and keep on piling up the agony until the moment arrives for the dropping of the curtain. All this Mr. Vane has effected in his new play. Why virtue should so persistently and so unreasonably subordinate itself to vice, why the hero should so chivalrously take upon himself the responsibility of the villain's crimes, why this should happen or that occur, we cheerfully confess our inability to explain. But that the circumstance is likely to disturb the equanimity of any popular audience there is no reason to believe. The story related by Mr. Vane is in its essentials as old as the hills, although some slight attempt at novelty, occasionally over-balanced, it is true, by a decided loss of consistency, is obtained in the setting of the tale. Thus the spectator is offered a glimpse of the Aspasian Club, and subsequently transported to the residence of the "Panther," a

lady of doubtful reputation, who challenges the heroine to a duel with pistols. Presently the rascally husband of this inconsiderate hostess sets fire to the house, which is burned down, *coram populo*. Naturally Mr. Vane reserves his greatest and most thrilling episode for the last. With genuine daring, although manifest inconsistency, he assembles his principal characters under the dome of St. Paul's, there to await news of the verdict upon which hangs the fate of the hero. Probable or improbable, the scene is undoubtedly of the most thrilling kind, and provides a fitting climax to a stirring and exciting melodrama. For the efforts of the performers we can only spare a line or two. Miss Keith Wakeman, as the "Panther," revealed an unsuspected fund of dramatic force; Miss Tyndall, if slightly over-weighted, made a pleasing and graceful heroine, and Mr. Austin Melford an irreproachable villain. As the hero, Mr. Ernest Leicester played with praiseworthy earnestness, and it certainly was not Miss Sydney Fairbrother's fault that this eccentric little comedian failed to get any capital out of the insignificant part of Gracie Chichester. The remaining characters were in excellent hands.

A Blind Marriage.

A New Play in Four Acts. Produced at the Criterion Theatre on August 20th, under the direction of Mr. Herbert Standing.

Jefferson D. Herd ..	Mr. Herbert Standing	Servant..	Mr. C. Terric
Lord Langdale ..	Mr. Herbert Waring	Mrs. Savile	Miss Carlotta Addison
Jim Spencer	Mr. Charles Fulton	Miss Savile	Miss Eva Moore
Dolly Talbot	Mr. H. V. Esmond	Linda Logan	Miss Kate Rorke
ussy Talbot	Mr. Arnold Lucy		

The author of *A Blind Marriage*—it is a *secret de Polichinelle* that it is Mr. Francis Francis, though his name is not given in the programme—has applied his ingenuity exclusively to the conduct of his plot. The work has no relation to life or literature; the characters, for the most part, are the stock figures of the drama, but the piece has spurts of intense excitement. Every act is worked up to a sensational "situation" at the fall of the curtain, and the audience is left wondering what will happen next. The moderate playgoer, who knows all the moves on the board, may some times anticipate a climax, but there is, at least, one scene, at the end of the third act, which will procure him a thrill. This is the scene in which Lord Langdale, who has been cured of blindness, sees his own wife for the first time, and realises that he has married the woman whom he supposes to have been the mistress of his friend and parasite, Jim Spencer. What motive Jim can have for this infamous slander is not patent. It is against his own interests, which are always paramount with him, to pretend that he has "ruined" a young

lady of whom Langdale preserves a ridiculously sentimental recollection. The plain fact is that Linda Logan had played the piano and sung for an honest living in the gambling saloon of a frontier town in America; nothing worse than that. Yet she is prostrated with anguish when the villain threatens to "expose" her. But the truth prevails, as it always does, in the last act, and the innocence of the heroine is established, and the despicable Jim is revealed in his true colours—if the expression may be allowed in the case of a villain who is uniformly black from the top of his head to the bottom of his heart. To the serious business of the plot a contrast is supplied by the silly proceedings of a couple of brothers, middle-aged twins, who are made up exactly alike, and the courtship of a very vivacious young lady, played with a feeling for true comedy by Miss Eva Moore, and the American, Jefferson D. Herd, whose character is realised to a nicety by Mr. Herbert Standing. The imperturbable American is the good genius of the piece. His skill as an oculist enables him to cure Langdale of his blindness, which he himself is well able to see through Jim Spencer, when he is prepared to bring to book all in good time. It is characteristic of this American to do nothing in a hurry, and he does not mind waiting for his turn till the last act. The interest of the play does not suffer by keeping the audience in suspense. Miss Kate Rorke, as the eventual Lady Langdale, is the very picture of a sympathetic heroine, with never a trace in manner or speech of Linda's American origin; and Mr. Herbert Waring gives a capital performance of Lord Langdale, whose blindness is indicated by the actor with delicacy that is quite a new effect in acting. To the number of popular names already mentioned may be added those of Mr. H. V. Esmond and Carlotta Addison, whose fine talents are utterly thrown away upon poor parts. When all is said and done, the author of *A Blind Marriage* can hardly share Goldsmith's opinion that it is better for a play to be damned outright by bad acting than saved simply by good acting, for the present company at the Criterion certainly help him over his stile.

Lost in New York.

First production in this country of Leonard Grover's Realistic Comedy-Drama. Produced at the Olympic Theatre, August 3rd.

Arthur Wilson	Mr. G. H. Harker	Guard at the Asy'um ..	Mr. E. A. June
Horatio Chester	Mr. William Lee	Mrs. Henrietta Wilson ..	Miss Maggie Hunt
"Hackensack" George ..	Mr. A. B. Cross	Jennie Wilson ..	Miss Lilly B. Sinclair
Martin Purcell .. / Tramp	Mr. Chas. E. Edwards	Caroline Peabody ..	Miss Lesley Bell
		Matron of the Asylum ..	Mrs. S. Calhaem
Anon Ally	Mr. C. Stuart Johnson	Marie	Miss Esther Phillips
Dr. Arnold	Mr. Robert Escott	Little Susie	La Petite Lucy
Mate of the "Bellevue" ..	Mr. James E. Fish		

Whilst the unsophisticated, for whose entertainment *Lost in New York* is primarily intended, may find a fierce delight, tempered by

the mild diversions of music-hall "turns," in this piece, the keener playgoer may enjoy it in the way that Macaulay enjoyed reading a bad novel. The piece makes no claim to critical consideration, for it is artless alike in substance and in form. Who is "lost in New York," or what, is more than we can say. For the epicure in sensations there is a real steam-launch on real water, which plays its part uncommonly well, though we have seen the thing done better on the Thames, and Miss Lilly B. Sinclair, in the leading part of a skittish heroine in short frocks and black stockings, who circumvents the desperate villains at every turn, has talent and assurance.

IN PARIS.

The revival at the Comédie-Française of *Les Rantzau*, a piece by Erckmann-Chatrian, which was brought out in 1882 with considerable success, is almost the only incident of the dullest month of the year. As will be remembered, the play is in four acts, and treats of the well-worn subject of a feud between two families being healed by the love of a youth of the one for a maid of the other. The part of the schoolmaster, which M. Coquelin made his own on the original production, has fallen to M. De Féraudy, who, without being brilliant, is at all events sound. Mlle. Bartet figured in the original cast, but is now replaced by Mlle. Du Minil as, so to speak, the Juliet of the play. The revival was moderately well received.

La Négrillonne, produced at the Bouffes-Parisiens on July 28th, starts with an unusually good idea, the full possibilities of which, however, the authors, MM. Durandes and Carré, have lamentably failed to demonstrate. A jealous woman manages by a disguise to enter the house of her sometime lover and his wife. She has obtained possession of a blackamoor infant, and when in course of time a child is born, she contrives to place the little negro by the side of the unsuspecting wife, and to remove her successful rival's real offspring. When the husband sees the child, he furiously threatens a divorce, firmly believing that the production of the child in a court of law will prove his case. After the plot has been fairly presented, the interest crumbles away, and the mediocrity of the interpreting company rendered the latter part of the play very dismal.

IN BERLIN.

Der Ueberfall, an opera in two acts by Herr Heinrich Zoellner, was produced on July 24th at the Flora Theatre. The libretto is adapted from Herron Wildenbruch's *Die Danaide*, a novel that

offers exceptional advantages for this kind of service. A picturesque, exciting, and dramatic first act is succeeded by a scene of sombre and tragic grandeur, such as is seldom met with outside the accepted classics. It is a story of the Franco-German war, with the inhabitants of a certain village engaged in a plot to murder and bury a whole regiment of German soldiers in a single night. In order to induce the soldiers to drink freely they are to be led to believe that they have arrived in the midst of some wedding festivities in which the whole village is partaking. A young widow, after some hesitation, is induced to personate the bride, her partner in the deception being an oft-rejected and unmannerly lover. When the regiment arrives the widow falls in love with one of its officers, and he with her. In the night, when the massacre has begun, she goes to the young officer and tells him of the plot, urging him to mount his horse and seek safety while there is yet time. This he does, taking her with him. His salvation, however, means that the secret of the identity of the guilty village cannot be kept from the German Government, and when the widow realises that she has betrayed her friends she stabs herself, content to know that she has saved her lover. Frau Eichberger was fully equal to the trying principal part, the young officer being well interpreted by Herr Mirsalis. The music, though rather unequal, and not marked by any particular loftiness of idea, is decidedly above the average of the new music of to-day. Especially successful is the composer in his accompaniments to the action and movement of the play—more frequently than not the weakest part of the score. The Deutsches, the Central, and the Unter-der-Linden are among the other theatres open, *Weber* and *Fugend*, *Eine Folle Nacht*, and *King Chilperich* being their respective attractions.

IN ITALIAN CITIES.

A widely advertised performance of an Italian translation of *Tartuffe* took place at the Mercadente Theatre, Naples, on August 13th, Signor Gustavo Salvini playing the chief part. From the first he carried his audience with him, and at the end of each act he was called repeatedly before the curtain. Similar recognition for their part in the performance was also bestowed on Signora Salvini, Signora Barach, and Signor Barsi. At the conclusion of *Tartuffe*, Signor Salvini recited Cossa's *Il Gladiatore*, and finally quitted the stage amidst loud cheers from his enthusiastic fellow-countrymen. *Carmen* was produced at Siena with the greatest success, a fact largely due to the efforts of Signora Farini, Signora

Venura, and Signor Benedetti, to whom the leading parts were assigned. *Carmen* was followed after a run of a few days by an equally successful production of Signor Mascagni's opera *Amico Fritz*. An opera season was opened with the beginning of last month at Leghorn at the Eden Theatre, and the chief works selected, excluding those which in England would be ranked as ballets, were Donizetti's *Don Pasquale*, and *Il Campanello dello Speziale*, and Paer's *Il Maestro di Cappella*. The list of singers engaged for the season included Signorina Cesarina Vanni (soprano), Signor Rodolfo Rossi (tenor), Signor Guido Checchi (baritone), and Signor Carlo Rossi (bass). At Rome, Signor Novelli's comedy, *Scossa Ondulatoria*, and Signor San Giacomo's *L'Ultimo Convegno* were played on the occasion of a performance given at the Quirino in honour of Signora Pia Marchi-Maggi. *Lucia di Lammermoor* was well produced and sung at the Politeama Reale, with Signorina Fornari and Signori Celani and Ricci in the chief parts, and *Lorenzino de'Medici* and *Lucrezia Borgia* had each a successful run at the Manzoni.

IN MADRID.

Carmen at the Buen Retiro achieved a well-merited success as regards both the management and the artistes. Señorita Cucini, who appeared for the first time in opera, although she is well known here as a brilliant actress in parts of a purely dramatic character, proved as Carmen that she is possessed of an excellent voice, and also that she knows how to combine it effectively with her dramatic gifts. Señor Maestrobuono made a very good Don José, and Señora Ibles, Señor Bellagamba, and Señor Banquells also distinguished themselves in the parts allotted to them. At the same theatre, in the course of the past month, the production of *Un Ballo in Maschera* also had a successful issue, Señorita Mazzi giving an excellent rendering of the part of Amelia, and Señorita Cucini again distinguishing herself. A new farce, entitled *El Jefe del Movimiento*, was produced at the Maravillas, and met with a good reception. The action passes in a hotel at Valladolid, and the story circles round the mishaps of an unfortunate gentleman who is possessed by an unreasoning dread of falling a victim to an anarchist bomb, and is continually finding cause for alarm where none exists outside his own unstable imagination. In accordance with the common practice at the first production of little works of the kind in Spain, the names of the authors were kept secret until it was seen that their reception by the audience would be favourable. It was then announced

that *El Jefe del Movimiento* was the product of the conjoint pens of Señores Arniches, Labra, and Torregrosa. The first performance of a new *zarzuela*, entitled *La Zingara*, which took place at the Circo de Colon, also proved a satisfactory venture. The authors, Señores Paso and Alvarez, have made the adventures of a barber, who in search of his wife makes his way to Poland while that country is in the height of one of its struggles for independence, the basis of a number of very effective situations, and of humour which is for the most part of a good quality. The libretto is accompanied by music composed by Señor Valverde, junior, and Señor Torregrosa.

With the exception of Felice y Codina's *Maria del Carmen*, no piece has received so much applause in the recent theatrical season as Joaquin Dicenta's *Juan José*, a three-act drama in prose, which presents a most realistic picture of the doings, the thoughts, and the feelings of the working classes of Spain. This subject interests not only the great mass of the people, but also the upper classes of society, and sufficiently explains the crowded houses which have witnessed the play. It would not, however, satisfy the critic if the work did not possess an eminently artistic form, and if the dialogue put into the mouths of the characters was not natural, powerful, expressive, appropriate, and occasionally brilliant. The plot is relatively simple, but is developed with much skill. The hero is one of those unhappy persons, who have known neither father nor mother nor family life, and who have been forced from their earliest years to gain a subsistence by toil. So it is easy to understand that he attaches himself with all his soul, and with a passionately jealous love, to the first being who appears to entertain a liking for him. Unhappily, this is a wideawake and pretty, but very flighty, girl named Rosa, whom he has rescued from a drunken admirer, and who now lives with him out of gratitude. But the contractor, in whose employment Juan José works as a bricklayer, Don Paco, has also cast an eye on the pretty creature, and attempts, with the aid of a go-between, to persuade her to desert her lover, a task none too difficult in the case of a changeable girl like Rosa, who is incapable of any deep feeling. A row takes place between the two men, through her fault, in the public-house, and the bricklayer loses his employment. In vain he seeks another place. Distress becomes daily more pronounced in the little household, and Rosa, who is not of the stuff of which martyrs are made, and in whose eyes the enticing offers of Paco are ever being dangled, becomes less and less inclined to continue to share the lot of her friend. First hints, then open threats, that she will leave him reduce him to extremities. After a passionate conflict with

himself he bursts out of the house, determined to make an end of poverty, cost what it may. He becomes a thief, falls into the hands of the police, and is condemned to eight years' imprisonment. The scene of the first act is laid in the prison, where Juan José makes the acquaintance of an old gaol-bird, who is acquainted with all the details of Spanish prison life, and who has risen to be a kind of leader among the convicts. This man suggests a plan to him by which he may attempt an escape while being transferred from one prison to another. Juan José hesitates at first; when he learns, however, by a letter from a fellow workman, who, with his sweetheart, forms a kind of contrast to the first pair, that almost immediately after his sentence his adored but fickle Rosa has justified his worst suspicions and thrown herself into the arms of her admirer, while he, who had become a thief for her sake, is languishing in gaol, he resolves to attempt the escape, and, in fact, succeeds. He appears in Rosa's house at the moment when she is making herself pretty against the return of "her" Paco, in order to spend a pleasant evening in his society. She suddenly detects his figure reflected in the looking-glass, and falls to the ground as if struck by a thunderbolt. The words addressed to her by her former lover, at first painful and then scornfully sarcastic, bring her to herself, and she seeks for pardon. He explains that after what he has suffered by the thought of her infidelity he has but one object—to kill the seducer. She might hinder it, but the words chosen by her in the agitation of the moment only increase his hatred. Then footsteps are heard on the staircase. "It is he!" she cried. "He!" "Oh, so you know his footstep! and you never knew mine!" He pushes her back violently as she attempts to restrain him, and shuts her in. Rosa, who has fallen to the ground, manages to rise, and in vain attempts to open the door. From without one hears a muffled noise, then a dreadful cry. The girl is almost dead with fear. "Paco, for God's sake, open!" bursts from her lips. The door opens, indeed, but Juan José it is who enters by it. "You! . . and Paco? What have you done to him?" "You will find him there," he replies, pointing to the back ground. "Dead!" "Of course. One of us two had to fall, and it turned out to be he." "And you have killed him? Murder!" "Murder, no. I have killed him, but I gave him time to defend himself by fighting—as *men* kill one another. And I did it, because no one, hark you, no one, as long as I live, shall possess you." "And what good will that do you if I only loved him—my Paco!" "Him?" "Yes, and I will avenge him." And in a last burst of energy she rushes to the window and shrieks for help. He tears her away, and presses his hand over her mouth. Rosa

tries to free herself, but sinks to the floor, after a brief struggle—dead. Without intending it he has stabbed her. Juan José is horrified. In this state of mind he is surprised by his former fellow-workman, who counsels him to flee. "Flee," he replies, "Why should I flee? . . . What should I gain by doing so? My life? That woman was my life, and I have killed her!"

The significance of the piece is, however, not quite conveyed to the reader by this sketch of the external action. In the conversation which these workmen have together, there undeniably lies a certain, perhaps unavoidable, tendency to lament over the political and social conditions of the country, over the hard struggle for existence, and the sad fate of those who, in certain circumstances, in spite of the most earnest desire to work, cannot get bread to eat. All this is more implied than brought into the foreground. It does not injure the artistic form or the dramatic beauty of the piece, but there it is, and it contributes more to arouse sympathy than to delight. According to the standpoint from which one looks at social questions, the piece is calculated to make one thoughtful or to make one interested. The Spanish public has more often ranged itself on the side of those who are influenced in the latter way. In any case, the play is an event in the literary life of the people which cannot be passed over with indifference.

IN NEW YORK.

Not one theatre, properly so called, is now open in New York. Six or eight roof-gardens are available, but not all are doing well, and last nights are advertised at some of them. At the Terrace Garden there is a short season of opera, the *répertoire* including *The Black Hussar* and *The Merry War*, while *Der Polengraf*, which has not yet been performed in America, is promised. By next month many of the Fall productions, upon which high hopes are set, will have taken place.

Echoes from the Green Room.

Sir Henry Irving, after varying his holiday by a stay at North Berwick, returned to London last month, and was one of the pall-bearers at the funeral of Sir John Millais at St. Paul's. At Bamburgh he was visited for a few days by Mr. and Mrs. H. B. Irving. The preparations for his revival of *Cymbeline* are now proceeding apace.

In Sir John Millais, as is well known, Sir Henry Irving has lost a good and appreciative friend. At the Garrick Club you may see a striking and sympathetic portrait by the great painter of the great actor, three-quarter length, in profile, the face looking to the right. Finely engraved, it will go down to remote posterity with the same artist's pictures of Bright, Beaconsfield, and Mr. Gladstone.

Mr. John Coleman has taken Drury Lane Theatre for the autumn season, and will shortly produce there a play entitled *Gold*. Consequently, the Raleigh-Hamilton drama, so long announced, will not be seen for the present. By arrangement with the executors of Sir Augustus Harris, the next pantomime at this theatre will be under the management of Mr. Oscar Barrett, whose *Cinderella* at the Lyceum may be accepted as a proof that in no respect will he fall short of the standard set up by his predecessor.

Madame Bernhardt, until lately at her home at Belle-Isle, has contributed to the *Figaro* a pleasant little *chronique*, entitled *Un Drame en Mer*, describing the everyday life and hardships of the peasantry of the adjoining country. One of her guests at Belle-Isle was Mr. Charles H. Meltzer, the American playwright and critic.

Signor Salvini, who seems to have grown no older since he last appeared in London, was recently asked to reconsider his decision not to act again. The chief manager at Trieste begged him to go through a season there. "It is now three years," he wrote in reply, "since I left the stage. I have no longer a company, nor could I now easily find one adapted to my répertory. For this reason I refused a lucrative offer for South America. What is done is done. I have retained all my physical means, and also my voice, but this does not induce me to begin my career again."

M. Jean de Reszke and his brother have been at Bayreuth for the present festival there, preparatory to their appearance as Siegfried and Wotan next season. Thence they go to Mont Dore, and thence to their Polish home.

Signora Duse will play at St. Petersburg and Moscow during the winter. We are informed that she is intent upon a Shaksperean repertory, including Lady Macbeth, Ophelia, and Desdemona.

Madame Modjeska intends to reappear in the United States next season. She is still in indifferent health, but expects to be equal to some new and elaborate production in 1897-8.

M. Massenet was lately at Constantinople, where he busied himself with a setting to a libretto by the Queen of Roumania.

Sir Henry Irving has found it necessary to remind two London managers that he possesses certain rights as to *Madame Sans-Gêne*, which they have coolly proposed to make the subject of operas.

Mr. Toole, refreshed by a holiday on the Continent, is about to begin another provincial tour.

Mrs. Patrick Campbell, who has been resting in a village on the Norfolk coast, is in possession of an adaptation, made by the author himself, of *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, in which she hopes to appear before long.

Boys Together, the new play by Mr. Comyns Carr and Mr. Haddon Chambers, will be produced at the Adelphi in a few days, Mr. Terriss still being the chief member of the company.

Miss Nethersole has secured the provincial and colonial rights of Mr. Hatton's last play, *When Greek Meets Greek*. She was very much struck with the two strong scenes in which Mathilde de Louvet is the chief figure, and these, it is understood, Mr. Hatton has supplemented by a love incident that will give additional opportunity to a clever actress. With hardly an exception the play has been highly commended by the critics, and one looks forward with interest to the production of the piece at a west-end theatre.

Mr. E. S. Willard is resting in the Black Forest, preparatory to his American tour, which begins at Boston on November 10.

Miss Kate Rorke goes to America with Mr. and Mrs. Tree.

Mr. John Davidson has contracted to write a poetical play for Mr. Beerbohm Tree. Let us hope that Mr. Davidson will not disappoint his admirers in his next work so much as he did in *For the Crown*. Perhaps with a freer hand his poetic instincts will assert themselves more readily.

The Haymarket Theatre is being fitted with a new and larger stage. It will be quite ready in October for the production of the piece drawn from one of Mr. Stanley Weyman's novels, upon which Mr. Cyril Maude and and Mr. F. Harrison are fixing their hopes.

All playgoers who have any extended experiences to draw upon will be glad "for old sakes' sake" to see Mr. Herbert Standing back at the Criterion. For sixteen years he supported Mr. Wyndham at this theatre, and he had become almost as familiar a figure in Criterion pieces as the manager himself.

The revival of *The Grand Duchess* at the Savoy ought to give that delightful actress, Madame Ulla von Palway, a yet finer hold upon the playgoing public of London than she gained by her clever performance in *The Grand Duke*. The piece has been little heard in London of recent years. The "book" of the opera is to be revised, and, it is said, to a great extent rewritten.

We deeply regret to announce that Miss Kate Rorke's husband, Mr. E. W. Gardiner, one of the most accomplished of our young actors, is suffering from a heavy mental affliction. He is now at Virginia Water, and in all probability will not be amongst his many friends again for some time.

Mr. Arthur Bourchier, having been unable to cancel his tour, had to cut short the run of *The Queen's Proctor* in the full tide of success; but he will revive the piece next Easter when he returns to London after his provincial and American engagements. He has also in hand, for produc-

tion, when needed, a new comedy by M. Sardou and Mr. Herman Merivale's *Charlotte Corday*, which latter ought to give Miss Violet Vanbrugh an excellent opportunity for the display of her talent. The difficult part of the lover in *The Queen's Proctor*, originally taken by Mr. W. A. Elliot, was during the latter part of the run in the hands of Mr. Charles Troode, a young actor of decided promise, who skilfully played also the private secretary in *The Chili Widow*. Mr. Troode learnt the rudiments of his art with Miss Thorne at Margate.

Mr. Lewis Waller, Miss Florence West, and Mr. Cartwright are taking *A Woman's Reason* round the provinces for a short tour.

Mr. Daly, as we have already stated, is not going to produce his conglomerate version of the two parts of *Henry IV.*—at least not in London just yet. He has promised, however, that Miss Ada Rehan will next year appear in two fresh Shaksperean characters. She has long been desirous of playing Imogen.

The Carl Rosa Opera Company is to pay London another visit before long, breaking their tour of the provinces by a stay of several weeks at Drury Lane. *Lohengrin*, *The Valkyrie*, and *The Meistersinger* will be given.

Sir Alexander Mackenzie has composed a comic opera, the book being by Mr. Burnand and Mr. Rudolph Lehmann. Rumour speaks of it as being in the nature of a satire upon the German Emperor, the chief character being a monarch who fancies himself a universal genius, but who, though Jack of all trades, is master of none. It will be remembered that *Once upon a Time*, Mr. L. N. Parker's version of a German play, made to the order of Mr. Tree, was supposed to be a skit directed against William II.

Mr. Gladstone's visit to a performance of *The Sign of the Cross* at Chester will be of service to an already successful play. In a letter addressed to Mr. Wilson Barrett as to the piece, Mr. Gladstone spoke of its "strong dramatic spirit," its "lofty aim," and the "judgment and tact as well as force" displayed "in the management of a difficult dialogue." But the following sentences show more clearly why the drama appealed so strongly to the aged statesman's sympathies: "You seem to me to have rendered, while acting strictly within the lines of the theatre, a great service to the best and holiest of all causes—the cause of Faith. The audience, which showed reasonable self-government even in the smaller points, appreciated most highly the passages which were most directly associated with this service and with the fundamental idea of the piece. And I rejoice to hear of the wide and warm approval which the piece has received, most of all because its popularity betokens sound leanings and beliefs in the mass of the people, and shows you acted nobly, as well as boldly, in placing your reliance upon them." That puts into words what so many estimable people feel about the piece without being able to express it. Mr. Wilson Barrett, by the way, is to be the sole author of *Daughters of Babylon*, but Mr. Louis N. Parker, who was to have assisted him with this piece, may perhaps collaborate with him in another drama of the same class. *The Sign of the Cross* has already started on its career abroad. It is to be placed shortly at Antwerp and Brussels, and possibly also in Paris.

Mr. T. P. Clarke, an American journalist and dramatist, has received a commission from Sir Henry Irving to write a play relating to George Washington. Mr. Clarke is the author of a drama taking Machiavelli for its leading character.

The committee organized to erect a memorial to Sir Augustus Harris has

not yet made much progress. At the outset they recommended that the bulk of the money subscribed should be divided between the Actors' Benevolent Fund and the Royal Society of Musicians, ten per cent. of the total amount being reserved for the erection of a personal memorial. Unfortunately, this proposal has given rise to a considerable difference of opinion among the intending donors, some holding that the Actors' Orphanage and the Charing Cross Hospital should be among the charities to be benefited, and others that the personal memorial should have chief consideration. The precise form which the personal memorial should take is also in question. Not a few think, with Lady Harris, that in the first place a statue of Sir Augustus should be set up, either in the hall of Drury Lane Theatre or near the scene of his labours. The last meeting on the subject resolved that each donor should be asked to state whether he wished his money to be devoted to the erection of a statue or to a charitable object. At present, therefore, all is chaos.

For reasons hardly explicable, but not altogether unknown, the Prince of Wales has shown a *parti pris* in the matter. He has given his patronage to the movement, on the condition, however, that the question as to a statue should be kept in the background, and that most of the money subscribed be given to the charitable institutions in which Sir Augustus Harris took particular interest. It is not improbable that this interference with what, may be the predominant wish of the subscribers will defeat its own object.

The estate of the late Sir Augustus Harris has not yet been fully appraised. His capital was engaged in so many enterprises of all kinds that the realization of his total financial worth was well-nigh an impossibility. The executors, however, have been granted probate on £23,677, which stood to his credit at his bankers at the time of his death. Sir Augustus leaves half the estate to Lady Harris, and the other half to the lady in trust for their daughter Florence. It is understood that the greater part of Sir Augustus' personal property, jewels, plate, horses, carriages, etc., goes to his wife.

Mr. H. de Lange, Mr. Sydney Brough, and Miss Beatrice Ferrar have been engaged for the production of Messrs. Parker and Goodman's play *Love in Idleness*, at Terry's Theatre next month. The piece was first tried at Brighton last March, and Miss Bella Pateman, who was then particularly successful in one of the parts, has been retained for the London presentation.

Mr. Hollingshead, in the course of a recent interview, added to a story already related in his autobiography, *My Lifetime*. Some years ago, a prominent Nonconformist, narrow-minded to the verge of bigotry, made war upon theatrical amusements, especially the ballet, and had him blackballed at the Reform Club for no other reason than that he was the manager of the Gaiety. All the time, it appears, a firm to which this devout person belonged was supplying Mr. Hollingshead with pink silk "tights" by the thousand—"their own manufacture, warranted."

Messrs. Fradelle and Young, of Regent-street, have produced an excellent flash-light photograph of the company at the Whitehall Rooms at the last dinner in aid of the Royal General Theatrical Fund.

No little discussion has been aroused by our article last month as to the unjustifiable use of the term "actress" in police-court and other newspaper reports. "The whole theatrical profession," writes a distinguished actor to us, "is under a debt of gratitude to you for your timely utterance on this subject." The *Daily Courier*, on the other hand, attempts to defend the practice. "*The Theatre*," it says, "contends that the culprit, in nine

cases out of ten, is not an actress, but only a person who appears on the stage. The tendency among ladies who are in trouble to assume with meagre right the title of actress is quite explicable. It arises from the cause which impels men in similar predicament to describe themselves as journalists." But "the editor of *The Times* is not hurt when a 'journalist' appears at Marlborough-street; nor should Miss Ellen Terry blush when an 'actress' makes her début in the dock." The *Courier's* argument may strike not a few of us as a little faulty. Many sub-editors are sure that such a headline in the placards as "An Actress in Trouble" will help the sale of their paper; consequently, whether the culprit is really an actress or not, she is described as an actress. In all probability, the headline "A Journalist in Trouble" would not serve to dispose of a single extra copy.

Perhaps in a defiant spirit, the *Daily Courier* continues the practice we have reprobated. On the 31st of July it gave an account of what it called "a fight in an actress's house—a scandalous affair." Few were surprised to find that the "actress" in question was really a "music hall artiste."

The abuse in question is further illustrated by a piece of news from New York. A woman made notorious in a trial for murder intends to go on the stage, of which she has had no experience. She modestly fixes her remuneration at a thousand dollars a week. Of course, no manager with a sense of self-respect would favour such an enterprise, even if he knew that it would be to his profit.

Michael and His Lost Angel has just been printed. Though unsuccessful on the stage, it will be seen to possess considerable literary value. The preface is by so keen and learned a critic as Mr. Joseph Knight, who describes the play as the best Mr. Jones has given the Stage, and as in the full sense a masterpiece. "It is the work," he adds, "of a man conscious of strength and sure of the weapons he employs. Whether the Stage shall know it again who shall say?"

It is understood that an actress undoubtedly versatile and accomplished, but now somewhat in the sere and yellow leaf, will not again appear as Rosalind in *As You Like It*. Her reason, she says, is that Shakspere, the author, might not have been so irreproachable in the relations of private life as a good matron would expect. In the absence of evidence to the contrary, he might have been unkind to his wife, have led a wild life in London, and have died, as tradition has it, through having a glass too much with Ben Jonson. No; she will not reappear in any of his plays.

Here is a curious coincidence. In *Good Words* for July there was an article about "Deaths on the Stage," from the pen of Mr. Baring Gould. In the *Pall Mall Magazine* for August is a story by Mr. Frankfort Moore, in which a jealous rival attempts to kill Peg Woffington by substituting a real for a "property" dagger in a stabbing scene. It is strange that both these should have appeared within a few weeks of the unfortunate occurrence at the Novelty Theatre, which resulted in the death of Mr. Temple Crozier. Mr. Wilson Barrett, it will be seen, is getting up a subscription to erect a memorial to the young actor who met with so sad a fate.

Following upon Mr. Kuhe's musical recollections, of which we were able to speak recently in terms of warm commendation, are to come the memoirs of Signor Arditi, extending over a period of half-a-century.

Thanks to *The Stage*, the railway companies have just made a much-desired concession to touring players. On and after the first day of this month, parties of ten or more actors or actresses travelling in the provinces

will be conveyed at a rate not exceeding three quarters of the ordinary single fare.

The Covent Garden Theatrical Fund has lately been the subject of much discussion. It seems to have been established by a private Act of 1776, for the assistance of actors who had actually played at Covent Garden Theatre, and for them alone, As this house has been for so long given up to the Opera, the number of persons eligible for the benefits of the Fund is naturally becoming smaller and smaller. As each ones dies, the remaining participants receive larger and larger shares, and eventually, on the tontine principle, the latest survivor will take the whole amount in the Fund's coffers. But the Fund was established for the benefit of the theatrical profession, and not for that of a few persons, and consequently efforts are being made to find some means of broadening the basis of its works. Several questions in the House of Commons led to the discovery that the charity was outside the control both of the Charity Commissioners and of the Friendly Societies' Act. So the matter must stand until next session, when Mr. Hogan intends to introduce a short Bill with the object of altering the constitution of the Fund, and making it more useful to the dramatic profession as a whole.

Mr. Snowden Ward, who, by the way, has just brought out a delightful quarto, with illustrations, under the title of *Shakespere's Town and Times*, writes to us with reference to an article in our last issue. "Mr. Davenport Adams," he says, "speaks of royalties on Shakspere, and vaguely suggests that they should be devoted to 'a theatre in London, in New York, in Montreal, in Melbourne, devoted solely to his plays.' May I remind Mr. Adams, and several other recent writers, that the Shakspere Memorial Theatre at Stratford-on-Avon is but a half-finished ideal? The Memorial Theatre and Library are a standing monument to the munificence of a few enthusiasts and to the niggardliness of Shakspereans generally. Garrick dreamed of such a place as a world's school of acting and elocution, and those who nobly planned and bravely built the Memorial, in the face of stolid indifference and miserably inadequate support, did their utmost to realise that dream. If actors, managers, or any other persons interested in Shakspere, have funds for memorial purposes, it seems to me that reverential sentiment, as well as commercial common-sense, point to the utilisation of the Memorial already provided, at the birth-place of the bard, before further schemes are floated."

The Elizabethan Stage Society will during the winter give a performance of *Twelfth Night*, in the old hall of the Middle Temple, where it is supposed the first representation of the comedy took place. The society will also give *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, probably in the hall of one of the City Companies.

The Liar, lately revived at the Royalty, can boast of an interesting genealogy. It came from Steele's *Lying Lover*, which came from Pierre Corneille's *Menteur*, which came from *La Verdad Sospechosa*. Not a few writers have assumed that the last-mentioned piece is by Lope de Vega. But is that so? "It has been attributed," writes Corneille in his *examen* of the *Menteur*, "to the famous Lope de Vega; but there lately fell into my hands a volume by Don Juan d'Alarcon, in which he claims that the comedy is his, and complains that the printers have circulated it under another name."

Be this as it may, the piece marks the beginning of a great chapter in the history of literature. Before it appeared comedy relied almost exclusively

upon intrigue. *La Verdad Sospechosa* showed the importance of combining intrigue with delineation of character. *Le Menteur*, which improved upon the innovation, at least helped to direct the genius of Molière into its right channel. "When Corneille's comedy appeared," said the author of *Tartuffe* to Boileau, "I was longing to write a play, but did not know how. My ideas were confused. *Le Menteur* served to fix them. The dialogue showed me how educated people talked; in Dorante I saw the necessity of character, the true nature of refined pleasantry, the value of a moral in comedy. Had *Le Menteur* never been written, in fact, I might have produced some pieces of intrigue, such as *L'Etourdi*, but not, I fear, *Le Misanthrope*." "What you have just said," replied Boileau, "does you more honour than the finest of your works." Of course, as Mr. Hawkins, in his history of the French stage, has pointed out, Molière overrated his obligations to *Le Menteur*. He left it an immeasurable distance, and the lessons it taught him must soon have come by intuition. But the spirit which prompted his avowal to Boileau derives higher lustre from this fact; it was as though the author of *Macbeth* and *Lear* had declared that but for Peele and Marlowe he would not have been possible.

The Lying Lover was produced at Drury Lane in 1704. In the words of Steele himself, it was "damned for its piety," having been written to suit the views propounded by Jeremy Collier, a few years before, as to the character of the English stage. However, it was laid freely under contribution in *The Liar*, another adaptation of *Le Menteur*, this time by Samuel Foote, who, with characteristic impudence and effrontery, declared that he had derived his inspiration from *La Verdad Sospechosa*. He could not have read a page of Spanish to save his life.

THE revival of *The Liar* has given rise to some pretty blunders. One "Jack Moulton, comedian," writes to inform the world that the play was "freely adapted from Thomas Corneille's French vaudeville, *Le Méntéur*" Before rushing into print again, Mr. Moulton would do well to understand that Pierre Corneille was not Thomas Corneille, that comedy is not vaudeville, and that "Méntéur" is not French. Let the cobbler stick to his last Even funnier than these three blunders in one sentence is an assumption by the London correspondent of a Paris paper that "M. Samuel Foote" is a dramatist of to-day, and has written this adaptation expressly for Mr. Bourchier.

THE revival of *Montjoye*—a play which, under the title of *A Bunch of Violets*, has of late years been made popular in London by Mr. Tree, and in the provinces by Mr. C. W. Somerset—will take place at the Comédie Française early in September. M. Leloir is to be the Raoul, Madame Pierson the Henrietta, and Madame Wanda de Boneza the Margerite.

COLLE'S *Vérité dans le Vin* is to be revived at the same house under the title of *Le Poëte*.

Manon Roland will probably reappear at the Français next month, Mlle. Bartet succeeding Mme. Worms-Baretta in the principal part.

Cendrillon, M. Massenet's latest work, will be given at the Opéra Comique next winter, Mdlle. Delna, M. Fugère, and Mdlle. Lejeune undertaking the chief parts.

A STATUE of Mdlle. Clairon, the great tragic actress of the last century, will shortly be raised in her native town, Condé-sur-Escaut.

M. EMILE FAGUET has succeeded M. Jules Lemaître as the writer of the dramatic weekly *feuilleton* in the *Journal des Débats*.

M. Joliet, the retired actor, has just died, aged sixty-one.

If M. Emile Zola's *Rome* is to be dramatised, it must be by the author himself. M. George Duval wished to undertake the task, but was enjoined to "keep his hands off." M. Zola, having no further plot in his brain to work out, thinks of returning to journalism. Perhaps he may not be in error.

M. Edmond de Goncourt, so long associated with the school of realistic fiction in France, died suddenly in July at M. Alphonse Daudet's country place, where he was on a visit, in his seventy-fourth year. He wrote several plays, none of which, however, were successful. Among them were *Manette Salomon*, produced early in the year; *Henriette Maréchal*, *Germinie Lacerteux* and *Charles Demailley*.

The receipts at the Paris theatres during 1895-96 have been higher by £36,000 than those of 1894-95. The Opéra, the Théâtre Français, the Odéon, the Gymnase, and the Variétés all show increases, substantial increases in the case of the last two. The takings at the Opéra Comique, the Vaudeville, and the Renaissance, however, have all fallen off.

My Official Wife, the piece which the censor forbade in Vienna, has been performed in Munich in Hans Olden's translation. *Die Officielle Frau* has profited by the ungallant treatment accorded to her in the Austrian capital, and is drawing large audiences to the Görtnerplatz Theatre. This play, while it is not performed in Vienna, has given rise to any number of articles in the newspapers, and has been the means of circulating the novel upon which it is based to a degree which could never have been attained but for the censor's excellent advertisement.

From Vienna comes the announcement of the death of the basso Herr von Rokitansky, once well-known in London, aged sixty.

Projects to perpetuate the memory of Signor Rossi are neither few nor far between in Italy. For one thing, a fine new street in the centre of Florence is to bear his name.

Good news for the musical world. Signor Mascagni is at work upon an *Iris*, Signor Leoncavallo upon a setting of *La Vie de Bohème*, and Isidore de Lara upon a story of Ireland in '96.

Signor Giordano, whose opera, *Andrea Chenier*, has brought him largely increased fame, has a pretty house at Milan. He is about to marry Signora Spazza, daughter of the proprietor of the Grand Hotel in that city. "I admire Wagner," he lately remarked to a correspondent, "but think that his system is open to question. There is no more reason to make the orchestra the principal element in an opera than to give predominance to the singing." Signor Giordano, now in his thirty-third year, is of simple habits, fond of solitude, and anything but disposed to advertise himself.

Signor Leoncavallo, the composer of *Pagliacci*, intends to visit America towards the close of the year.

Signor Franchi died the other day in Milan at an advanced age. He was for eighteen years Madame Patti's business manager, and had the credit of looking after her interests with pious care and the utmost firmness. Once, in Philadelphia, the management suffered from a temporary want of money. "Madame Patti," Franchi said to the impresario, "shall not sing unless she gets her five thousand dollars in advance, according to contract." By seven o'clock, when the house was open, four thousand dollars had been amassed. "Caro Signore," said Franchi to the impresario, "Madame Patti is almost dressed for the performance. She has on every-

thing save one slipper, but refuses to put it on unless she receives the remaining thousand dollars. I have tried to argue with her, but am powerless." Of course he had his way, probably without the diva knowing anything about the incident. It is said that he died "in comparative idleness and poverty."

THE stage in Italy has fewer prejudices to contend with than in other countries. Madame Ristori's son is one of Queen Marguerite's gentlemen of honour. His mother, by the way, is described in a recent letter as "still very handsome, with a most aristocratic bearing."

THE Claque in Madrid is apparently doomed. The other day an audience hissed a new opera. The Claque, as in duty bound, applauded lustily. The rest of the audience fell upon them tooth and nail, and the curtain was rung down upon a free fight in all parts of the house.

FROM Brazil, his native country, comes news of the death of Senor Gomez, the composer of *Il Guarany*. Of Spanish birth, he was an Italian by education, and for some years directed the Conservatoire at Pesaro.

MR. W. D. HOWELL has dramatised his novel, *The Rise of Silas Lapham*. Mr. Jefferson, Mr. Sol Smith Russell, and Mr. W. H. Crane have all been offered the play, which, however, none of them, it seems, have hastened to secure.

IT is expected that Mr. J. S. Clarke, who has long lived in retirement near London, will reappear in New York next season in *Toodles* and *The Widow Hunt*.

MR. MANSFIELD will shortly return to the Garrick Theatre, where *Richard III.* and *The Merchant of Venice* are to be revived next season. Miss Cameron (Mrs. Mansfield) was lately in Paris.

MR. A. M. PALMER'S stock company, with Mr. Henry Miller at its head, will open the new Great Northern Theatre in Chicago early in October, with a romantic drama by Mr. Paul M. Potter, and will return to New York next winter. By that time they will have been joined by Miss Blanche Walsh, now in Australia with Mr. Nat Goodwin.

MR. LACKAYE, the Svengali of the American stage, nearly lost his life last month, a vessel in which he was travelling from Santa Cruz to San Francisco going ashore in dangerous circumstances.

MR. FAVERSHAM will be the chief actor at the Empire, New York, next season.

A NEW play by Mr. Bret Harte, entitled *Sue*, will be produced at the Broad Street Theatre, Philadelphia, on September 11th.

MRS. JOHN HOEY, long so popular on the American stage, died at New Jersey on July 21st, aged 75. Born at Liverpool, she began her career as a concert singer, but soon afterwards became an actress. She supported the elder Booth and Macready, and for many years was identified with the great Wallack company. She distinguished herself equally in tragedy, farce, and comedy. As Mr. Stephen Fiske has pointed out, Mrs. Hoey, following the example of Madame Vestris in London, introduced the style of elaborate dressing on the stage.

THE estate of the late Mrs. Stowe has been valued at about £10,000, a um much less than the extraordinary success of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* as a book and on the stage, with her quiet way of living, would have led one to suppose.

CURIOUS superstitions are still rife among American managers. According

to some of them, it is not so much the attraction that draws the public as the building in which the attraction is presented. Yet, as the *New York Mirror* remarks, the largest business ever done in America by Sir Henry Irving was in San Francisco, where in two weeks he played, in a barn-like structure that had previously been given over to cheap companies, to $60,000.

Mr. J. E. Dodson has returned from a fishing excursion in Canada, to resume work with the Empire Theatre stock company, which is to begin on tour at San Francisco.

Mr. Keith, the Boston manager, has the honour of effecting what may be called a half-conversion. Recently, on an Atlantic steamship, he met Miss Frances Willard, who, in addition to being one of the most strenuous advocates in America of temperance, has set her face firmly against the theatre. Her organ, the *Union Signal*, prints a letter from her as to a conversation between the two on the subject of the Stage and the home. She now admits in effect that diversion is necessary to a healthy existence, that the bad on the stage might be driven out by the success of the good, and that the people who stay away from theatrical amusements should go to all of a wholesome character.

During the recent intense heat, the company rehearsing *Under the Polar Star* at the New York Academy of Music found it well to wear working men's calicoes. One afternoon they went across the street to a restaurant, seated themselves at a table, and asked for the bill of fare. Up came the proprietor. "You working men can't eat here," he said. "But," remonstrated one of them, "we are *Polar Star* actors." "I don't care what kind of actors you are ; you can't eat here." And out they had to go.

South Africa continues to be well looked after in the way of theatrical entertainment. There are two companies playing in Johannesburg — one sent out by Mr. George Edwardes, under the direction of Mr. Edward Sass, the other under the leadership of Mr. Herbert Flemming. Nearly all the latest plays are seen by the Johannesburgers almost as soon as they are produced in London. And capitally played they are, for the South Africans expects good value for their money. Mr Edward Searelle, who has just come back to England, intends to start again for the Cape shortly with a company enrolled to play light comedies only. Mr. James Nelson is again a mainstay of Mr. Edwardes' troupe.

THE THEATRE.

OCTOBER, 1896.

Our Watch Tower.

SIR HENRY IRVING CRITICISED.

ONE of the most interesting and suggestive chapters in the biography of Sir Henry Irving might be made out of the printed criticism to which he has been exposed for nearly a quarter of a century. If any future historians of the stage should have the courage and perseverance to wade through it, they will find themselves not a little bewildered as to what his best claims to our admiration really were. No actor, it is clear, has ever caused wider divergences of opinion than he. Dr. Doran, speaking of the first appearance in London of John Philip Kemble, says that the fierceness and variety of the criticism denoted that an original actor had come before the town. Sir Henry Irving, a finer artist than Kemble, has had to face a more trying ordeal in this way, partly owing to the marvellous extension of the periodical press, but still more to the courage and decision, backed by unique gifts, with which he disregards some of the most cherished traditions and usages of the stage. Probably the "fierceness and variety of criticism" in his case reached their highest about twenty years ago, when, not long after it had been oracularly declared at Drury Lane that Shakspere spelt ruin and Byron bankruptcy to managers, the tenderness and force and poetic beauty of his Hamlet secured for a great but long-neglected play the unprecedented run of two hundred nights. At that period he was caricatured and lampooned and misrepresented to an extent of which English public itself furnishes few examples. The smaller fry of journalism seemed to think that he would have but a short-lived popularity. He was solemnly warned that his so-called "mannerisms"—has a great artist of any kind ever been without some distinctive peculiarity of style?—would prove the grave of his reputation. To

adapt a sarcastic phrase in one of Hazlitt's criticisms upon Edmund Kean to our present purpose, "it appeared that an ingenious set of persons, having observed certain mannerisms in the chief of the Lyceum company, went regularly to the theatre to confirm themselves in that singular piece of sagacity, and, finding that he had not altered them since they last saw him, were determined, until such a metamorphosis was effected, not to allow a particle of genius to him, or of taste or common-sense to those who were not stupidly blind to anything but his defects." Meanwhile, however, the magnetism of the actor had had its inevitable effect; he made a large public for himself, and his position as the head of his profession became practically unassailable. He is now allowed on nearly all hands to be a great actor, a great manager, a great educator. Nevertheless, he remains an object of shallow detraction on a smaller scale. The pre-eminence he has attained is not without its drawbacks. "No subject?" editors used to say to smart helpers in the dull season; "then let us have a fling at Irving."

Curious among the curiosities of criticism is an article contributed to the latest number of the *National Review* by Mr. William Wallace, who is already known as a writer in the staid and erudite *Academy* on contemporary verse. In no sense, we are constrained to say, is he fitted to discuss "Sir Henry Irving's claims," with which he professes to deal. He approaches his subject as a recluse rather than from a practical point of view. He has but a limited power of perception; he fails to understand the requirements of latter-day audiences; he is not invariably consistent with himself. Like other self-constituted critics, Mr. Wallace holds that pure theatrical art is sacrificed at the Lyceum to beauty and completeness of *mise en scène*. Sir Henry Irving has "wrought his downfall as an actor by his brilliance as a manager." "Each production surpassed its predecessor; architects, artists, musicians, all had a share in bringing to life again these actual pictures of old-world revelry, while acting, as an art in itself, became submerged by the surroundings. It was not till we had examined through our opera-glasses the scenery and dresses that we settled down to listen to the play." As to the attitude of mind disclosed in this last sentence only say that it is not that of appreciative people in general. In point of fact, such players as Sir Henry Irving and Miss Terry can have no idea of effacing themselves on the stage, and it is abundantly clear that the aim of the former as a manager is simply to provide them both with surroundings at once correct, artistic, and complete. If success at a theatre is to be achieved by mere spectacular effect, without the aid of rare histrionic

talents, why, we may ask, has not some capitalist come forward to make the experiment? "We all know," continues Mr. Wallace, "the story of the Cardinal's robe which had to be procured for Wolsey; but as far as acting was concerned red flannel would have done as well as costly Genoese silk." Perhaps it would not; Sir Henry Irving, as an authority on costume, might have something to say here. Logic, as we have already hinted, is not one of Mr. Wallace's strong points. After asserting that Sir Henry Irving has wrought his downfall as an actor by his brilliance as a manager, he admits that in the closing scenes of *Becket*, "where, with nothing but a painted cloth to represent the cell, no dress save a black and white habit, we saw the patience and piteous resignation of the Benedictine waiting for the last, the actor seemed to fill the stage with the muteness of his eloquence, with the inactivity of his action, if such expressions may be permitted." This is very much like a contradiction in terms. Nor does Mr. Wallace appear to have a close acquaintance with at least one capital production of European literature. In effect, he complains that Sir Henry Irving's Mephistopheles is light and sportive in tone. Did he expect to see on the stage a Satan according to Milton? If so, we recommend him to read Goethe's tragedy, as he may see that the actor merely followed and realised the meaning of his author. Mr. Wallace falls into increased confusion of thought as he goes on. Sir Henry Irving's portraitures have "too much pathetic picturesqueness," "too many claims on our private sympathy." "Let him represent the most atrocious villain in the dramatic *répertoire*, and he will show us a stricken martyr demanding our acquiescence in his guilt, tearing our heartstrings, instead of stirring us to rend him limb from limb." It would be interesting to know how far the "stricken martyr" is to be found in Sir Henry Irving's Louis XI., Macbeth, Richard III., Iago, Dubosq, and one or two other "atrocious villains" made familiar to us at the Lyceum. Sir Henry Irving, we are next informed by Mr. Wallace, is an actor "of moments." The same thing used to be said by small critics of Edmund Kean, the unity and grandeur of whose conceptions have now, by the concurrent testimony of the best of his contemporaries, become one of the highest traditions of the English stage. We have no sort of doubt that a similar distinction is in store for Sir Henry Irving.

Enough has already been said to show how far Mr. Wallace is to be trusted for guidance on his subject, whether as to knowledge, clearness of reasoning, or power of appreciation. But a question which he raises towards the end of his unintentionally

amusing article should not be overlooked. Possibly with particular aspirations of his own, he complains that Sir Henry Irving has done but little for a new development of the drama. "Surely," he says, "there are modern dramatists of repute who have claims to recognition on the part of the Lyceum manager, just as much as modern painters and modern composers have. . . . If the Lyceum is to be regarded as the home of rhetoric and poetry, if it is to be identified with the best workmanship in dramatic material, as well as in representation and expression, the dramatists must not be ignored. . . . With all our gratitude to Sir Henry Irving for what he has given us at the Lyceum—given with a liberal hand, with the utmost conscientiousness, and with a full acknowledgment of his influence—we feel that he has yet to complete his purpose by appearing in a part written by a modern dramatist which will bring together all the stray leaves of detail, of thought and expression, and weave from them a wreath befitting the actor, his theatre, and his art." But where are such dramatists as Mr. Wallace speaks of to be found? For some years we have suffered from a singular dearth of dramatic genius. Sir Henry Irving, we are sure, is eager to secure a fine original piece in his way, but is generally unable to get one. His strength lies in the tragic, the historic, and the romantic; and the most competent dramatists of the day—Mr. Pinero, Mr. Grundy, and Mr. Jones—are loth to trust themselves in these regions. Even as it is, however, his record as to the production of original works is more remarkable than Mr. Wallace would have us suppose. Since 1871-2, when the success of *The Bells* made him the dominant influence at the Lyceum, he has given—we mention them in their chronological order—*Charles I.*, *Eugene Aram*, *Philip*, *Queen Mary*, *Vanderdecken*, *Iolanthe*, *The Cup*, *Ravenswood*, *Becket*, *King Arthur*, and other new pieces, while more are understood to be in preparation. Apart from comedy in its largest sense, this list may be taken as virtually exhaustive of the dramatic genius of our time. But for Sir Henry Irving, as everybody knows, *Becket* would not have appeared on the stage at all. He saw the possibilities of an acting drama in an unactable dramatic poem, and Lord Tennyson readily fell in with his views. In all the circumstances, we hope, Mr. Wallace notwithstanding, that Sir Henry Irving will adhere to the policy he has hitherto followed. He is the one great interpreter of Shakspere to-day; he has made Shakspere popular with all classes, and he would do well to go on playing Shakspere instead of frittering away his genius and energy and capital upon plays such as Mr. Wallace would probably favour.

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LADY MONCKTON.

Portraits.

LADY MONCKTON.

ONLY a few weeks ago, when Mr. Willard withdrew *The Rogue's Comedy*, and so brought his season at the Garrick Theatre to a close, it was announced—and with some show of authority—that Lady Monckton, the Lady Clarabut of Mr. Jones's play, intended to discontinue the active exercise of a profession to which she has been so closely attached. If this determination be a final one, or rather, if the subject of this brief sketch continue to feel herself unequal to the nervous strain of theatrical work, it is not too much to say that our stage will be to an appreciable extent the loser. Lady Monckton, it is well known, has identified herself with a class of character which is wont to exercise the managerial mind not a little when the casting of a modern play is in progress. It is easy enough to find actresses to deliver in merely competent fashion the lines which latter-day dramatists are wont to put in the mouths of their "society" dames; but it is by no means easy to secure in these cases the ease, the air, and the distinction which Lady Monckton brought to such parts as Mrs. Campion Blake in *The Crusaders*, and Lady Clarabut in *The Rogue's Comedy*. After her earlier successes in more strongly emotional characters, these impersonations came as a welcome surprise, and added to the list of the actress's admitted gifts a degree of versatility with which few of her admirers had credited her. It was no sudden whim that originally drew Lady Monckton to the stage. For her love of histrionic art an ancestry in whose veins ran a goodly measure of Gallic blood is doubtless responsible. But theatrical temptations in the heart of Suffolk are few; and it was not until after her marriage in 1858 with Mr. (now Sir) John Monckton, the present Town Clerk of London, that opportunity began to familiarise her with the glare of the footlights. Lady Monckton's career upon the amateur stage lies well within the recollection of mature playgoers. Her triumphs in those days were many; and when, some ten years ago, the production of *Jim the Penman* at the Haymarket first introduced her to the professional boards, our theatres gained an actress whose resources had already been developed to the full. In such parts as the Princess Claudia in *The Red Lamp*, Mrs. Seabrook in *Captain Swift*, Mrs. Cross in *The Idler*, the actress achieved some of her greatest successes; while, as we have said, her more recent appearances in a lighter order of character have made it a matter for real regret that the career of so accomplished and conscientious an artist should have reached its close.

The Round Table.

THE ACTOR-MANAGER.

By Henry Elliott.

YES, the good old subject has cropped up again, very probably because, during the "dead season," writers about the theatre are in want of topics to discuss, and are obliged sometimes to fall back upon venerable and worn-out matter. You would have supposed that this particular controversy had been laid at rest for ever. But no; an erratic, not to say eccentric, publicist, famous for his tendency to run amuck—Mr. Clement Scott—has thought fit to resurrect it, and to repeat, regarding it, all the old fallacies and misrepresentations—the fallacies in argument, the misrepresentations of fact. Is it worth while again to refute the one and to expose the other? You would not think so; and yet there are those who are still impressed by fallacy and misrepresentation, however ancient, so that they be re-stated with sufficient loudness and self-confidence. It ought not to be necessary at this time of day to assert the right of the actor-manager to exist; and yet the assertion must be made.

Our erratic friend begins characteristically by admitting that "some of the most successful managers of theatres in London have been actors," and then goes on to deprecate the introduction into the quarrel of the names of Macready, Charles Kean, Phelps, Henry Irving, and Bancroft, on the ground that these actor-managers are "brilliant exceptions to the general rule of a bad system." Brilliant exceptions! If to these names you add those of Buckstone, Wyndham, James and Thorne, Hare and Kendal, Terry, Barrett, Tree, Alexander, Willard, you have a list of the most notable theatrical managements of our time. What has our friend to say against the artistic achievements of the men last-named? The mere statement of a thesis is not sufficient; it ought to be supported by some definite and substantial proof. Among the managers of our day who were not actors one may mention Bunn, Maddox, E. T. Smith, Chatterton. Is anyone prepared to argue that we obtained from these worthy gentlemen

results more artistic than we have secured from the above-named actor-managers? Not that there is any occasion to depreciate the performances of the lay or non-acting managers, many of whom —such as Mr. D'Oyly Carte for example—have done excellent work in their time. All we have to do here is to resist the theory that the actor-manager is necessarily an enemy to art.

What, after all, are our eccentric friend's "arguments?" What are the charges he prefers? Well, the first is that actors and actresses are of necessity "inordinately vain," and, when they become managers, look after "themselves in the first instance and their pockets in the second." The plays they produce are produced for their self-advancement; they don't employ the best artists because they cannot bear to be effaced by a rival; and they so crush the ambition of the youthful player that, if he desires to distinguish himself, he must needs become a manager in turn.

Now, as to the "inordinate vanity" of the actor-manager, one might ask, in the first place, whether it could possibly exceed that of the writer on theatrical matters who appears to consider that his own views on all points are the only ones consistent with sanity and honesty, and who presses them upon the public and the profession, in season and out of season, *usque ad nauseam?* Putting this aside, however, we find on examination that what the theatrical commentator calls the "inordinate vanity" of actor-managers is, in reality, nothing more than their necessary acceptance of the public appreciation of their powers. What makes it possible for an actor to become a manager? His popularity with playgoers—a popularity earned generally by personal qualities and hard work. When a syndicate or a few friends place an actor or an actress at the head of a theatre, it is usually, if not always, because that actor or actress has such a following among theatre-lovers as to ensure, to all appearance, the commercial success of the enterprise. When an actor ventures his own money in management, it is also because he believes he has a sufficient number of admirers to warrant him in taking such a step. The step once taken, the proof of the pudding is in the eating. If the public flocks to the actor-manager's theatre, he is justified in assuming that they approve of his action—that it is he, or at least he mainly, who is the magnet that draws them. Would our erratic friend advise Sir Henry Irving, Mr. Tree, or Mr. Alexander to produce a play in which he either did not figure at all or figured only in a tiny part? The fact is that the successful actor-manager—the actor-manager who fills his coffers—has every right to assume that the public desires to see his artistic gifts worthily and interestingly utilized. Our friend calls this "look-

ing after oneself." Well, this, as it happens, is what the public wishes its favourite actors to do. It is not vanity, it is sheer policy and nothing more, which leads the actor-manager to choose, accept, or commission a play in which he can be seen to more or less advantage.

That the actor-manager should "look after his pockets" is surely not to be regarded as a crime? How else is he to pay his way? The pity is that he does not always think sufficiently of the box-office. In the case of a certain play produced in London not so long ago, the actor-manager (so modest was he) did not "come on" until about the middle of the second act. The piece did not attract, and this over-modesty of the "star" had much to do, we may be sure, with its comparative failure. Had the actor-manager in question thought only of his pocket, he would never have produced that play; he would have produced something in which he was prominent throughout.

To say that the plays produced by actor-managers are always produced for their "self-advancement" is to talk sheer nonsense. The case just mentioned is an instance in point. Many others will at once occur to playgoers with memories. Look, for example, at Mr. Alexander's record. Not until he brought out *The Prisoner of Zenda* had he anything approaching to a "star" part. In *Sunlight and Shadow*, *Lady Windermere's Fan*, and *Liberty Hall*, he shared honours with Miss Marion Terry; in *Mrs. Tanqueray* he ceded the *pas* to Mrs. Campbell, and gave full opportunities to Miss Roselle and Mr. Maude; in *The Masqueraders* he was only one of a trio which included Mrs. Campbell and Mr. Waring; in *The Importance of Being Earnest* his *rôle* was no more effective than that of Mr. Aynesworth; in *The Triumph of the Philistines* the most striking parts were those of Mr. Waring and Miss Nesville. Take, again, the instance of Mr. Hare, who, at the Garrick, played second or third fiddle persistently until, in *A Pair of Spectacles*, he happened upon an excellent *rôle*, which, nevertheless, was not a whit more telling than that which he assigned to Mr. Groves. There is, in truth, a point at which an actor-manager, be he sufficiently eminent, cannot be said, truthfully, to produce any play for his "self-advancement." For many a year back Sir Henry Irving has been our leading actor; and nothing that he could do, however splendidly, could add materially to a fame which was, and is, world-wide. The artist who has triumphed as Iago does not put on *Cymbeline* in order to be seen in the character of Iachimo.

But, indeed, to exhibit the foolishness of our erratic friend's contentions is to slay the slain. There is that old story of the actor-manager not bearing a brother near the throne. Inci-

dentally, we have dealt with that already. Betterton, Garrick, Kemble, Macready, Charles Kean, Phelps, all, as we know, were actor-managers. But Betterton showed no jealousies, nor did Kean; Garrick acted with Quin; Macready brought out Miss Faucit; Kemble allowed himself to be effaced by his sister; Phelps engaged Miss Glyn, Miss Atkinson, Miss Addison, George Bennett, Henry Marston. Sir Henry Irving has employed the powers of Miss Ellen Terry, Miss Marion Terry, and Miss Geneviève Ward, as well as those of Mr. Terriss, Mr. Alexander, and other popular players. Mr. Wilson Barrett was long associated with Miss Eastlake and Mr. Willard; Mr. Willard has had Miss Marion Terry in his company. Mr. Tree did not shrink from the rivalry of Mrs. Patrick Campbell on the one hand, or of Mr. Lewis Waller on the other.

In a word, these periodical attacks upon the actor-manager are all bunkum. They have no foundation in reality; there is no sympathy with them among playgoers. The actor-manager exists and flourishes because the public likes him and supports him, and if it did not like him and support him he would have no theatre to manage. That he crushes "the young idea" is manifestly false. He trains it, and in due time it wants to run alone. If it is strong enough to run alone, the result is another actor-manager. That is all. One actor-manager makes many. Under Sir Henry Irving and Mr. Hare, Mr. Forbes Robertson acquired the popularity which enabled him to become for a season a sub-lessee of the Lyceum, and to produce *For the Crown* and *Romeo and Juliet*. After serving a tolerably long apprenticeship to various managers, Miss Emery and Mr. Maude are about to take the lead at the Haymarket, not because they have been "crushed" elsewhere, but because they believe their hold on the public to be such that they can safely spread their wings in this direction. Mr. Herbert Standing has lately been emboldened to experiment in management, and even so young a player as Mr. Welch has had the courage to tempt fortune in that fashion—not, assuredly, because either of them had been lacking in opportunities for displaying his capacity as an artist.

Our eccentric friend, by the way, suggests an alternative to the actor-manager—a commonwealth of players, headed by some one, not an actor, who would have the casting vote. These players would select the plays and have a share in the takings, and the casting of characters would be a matter of arbitration. Well, the experiment might be tried, but it does not appear to be promising. It is much to be doubted whether (even if it contrived to work smoothly) it would, or could, excite that public enthusiasm which is so large an element in theatrical success. After all, the

playgoing public likes to make its own heroes and heroines, and loves to support them loyally. The Comédie Française has prestige at its back, but as a living institution it is a long way behind the age. A Comédie Anglaise is impossible.

ABOUT STAGE COSTUME.

By Archibald Chasemore.

PLEASE don't be alarmed. I am not about to place before you a learned paper, full of research, on dresses of the drama, from the days when the ancient Greek manager, Æschylus, first introduced costume on the stage, B.C. 486, to the present day. Neither will I display to you a long list of items relating to the mediæval Coventry plays, such, for instance, as "Itm payd John ye Joiner for makyng & payntyng XII angels wynges, xijd. Itm payd XII youthes for wearyng ye same, iiijd. Itm payd for 1 pr. of hornes and tayle for Nicholas of ye fforge to playe ye devyll in, ijd.," and so on. Neither shall I ask you to dip with me into the pages of Pepys, and see how little Nellie Gwynne was dressed for the part of Cælia in *The Humorous Lieutenant* at the Duke's Theatre, or in her boy's clothes, mighty pretty, as Florimell in Dryden's *The Mayden Queen*, or in *Flora's Figary's*—but, stay! in this instance was not Nelly "dressing herself and all unready" when the naughty young diarist entered the tireing-room? By the way, why is Pepys always alluded to as a sly old gentleman? He was but twenty-seven years of age when he commenced the Diary, and ten years later ceased keeping his Journal.

And I do not intend reminding you once again how Garrick played Richard III. in some noble patron's square-cut coat and in his own full-buttomed wig. No. May it please you, we will simply discourse of the costumes of this century, and see how time has worked wonders in that particular branch of stage craft.

For the first half, right through the good old crusted period, costumes, especially those worn in romantic and melo-drama, ay, and in historical plays, too, were all mysteriously and wonderfully made. Never could they have been seen anywhere excepting on the stage. But why there? That is the question. There, is, 'tis true, a suggestion of the sunny South in the style. Take, for instance, the typical stage villain, say Grindoff in *The Miller and his Men*, and compare with that of a Venetian citizen.

Here is a certain resemblance; but what of that? We are

not enlightened. "Wait a bit," someone will say. "How about the old Italian plays and comedies? Surely here a connecting link will be found." Very well, we will leave that someone to connect.

Grindoff and a Venetian.

Speaking of *The Miller and his Men*, I remember when a boy seeing it played in the country by Morgan's travelling company—and a very clever company it was—and every character was dressed exactly after the Skeltic, one-penny-plain-two-pence-coloured pattern; and, really, in the old crusted days there was very little difference between the costumes worn on the stage and those of the characters in striking attitudes displayed on the sheets we used to colour, except that the latter were embellished with a superabundance of ornaments for tinselling purposes.

1d. Plain—2d. Coloured.
Richard III.

Do not some of us remember seeing a real (stage) Richard III. a good deal like this, though we may not care to say how long ago it was? Ha! Macbeth was Macbeth then; tartan plaid, sporren, bonnet, plaid stockings, and all. A splendid fellow, looking as if he had stepped on to the boards straight from the tobacconist's shop in Knightsbridge. There is a suggestion even unto this day of

the old style costume in some of our Hamlets' customary suits of solemn black.

Now, here is a portrait of Mr. Rowbotham as Alonzo the Brave, from the frontispiece of Duncombe's edition of that exceedingly romantic melodrama, which may explain what I mean—a kind of combination (bar the iron-clad shoulders) of the Dane and the Stranger. But it was not until Charles Kean, at the Princess's Theatre in the fifties, set things right and playgoers a-wondering at the correct and splendid mounting of his productions. I

Rowbotham as Alonzo.

Old Adelphi Guest, and Swell Lady from *Cheer Boys, Cheer.*

remember being taken to see his *Henry V.*, and shall never forget the regal grandeur of the Presence Chamber in the King's Palace, and the triumphal entry into London city of the victorious army after Agincourt.

Guests and guards have made rapid strides in the theatrical profession since the days of Albert Smith. Imagine an old Adelphi guest in the grand reception scene of *Cheer, Boys, Cheer!* Methinks he or she would not remain there long. No Worth in those days, except the worth of unrecognised talent, which doomed a guest to remain a guest with no real champagne to drink! And the guards and banner bearers in the spectacular pieces and pantomimes! By the way, why did they bear so many banners with the emblazoned sides always turned to the audience? Were they supposed to use them as weapons and to do battle with them?

A guard of that time would compare somewhat unfavourably with the same in a provincial pantomime nowadays. For in

pantomime and show pieces of to-day and burlesques of only yesterday has stage costume changed from garishness to gorgeousness, from commonplace to charming. Formerly a costume designer was not known; dresses were made up somehow in the wardrobe of the theatre. Then Grévin set the gay, parti-coloured ball a-rolling in Paris, and the two Alfreds, Thompson and Maltby, quickly caught it and kept it up in London. It was Alfred Thompson in a ballet at the Gaiety Theatre, and before him Grévin in Paris, and before *him* the Romans, who brought into prominence the combination of blue and green; and now, whenever a designer attempts the same thing in these colours, the critics (that is, when they deign to notice such an unimportant person as the designer) always speak about the "daring contrast" as if it were like wine at an auction—a rare and peculiar blend.

Guard *tempus* Albert Smith, and ditto a swell "boy."

1831 Aladdin.

Miss Farren as Aladdin.

If you wish for an example of the changes of costume in burlesque or extravaganza, look here upon this picture, and on this.

The first is that of Aladdin in an extravaganza produced in the year 1831—the side whisker of the hero denoting that the part was not played by a "principal boy" in those times—the other is the young Aladdin of Miss Nellie Farren of exactly fifty years later. It was in this costume, designed by the present writer, she sang her greatest song, "The Street Arab." In the days of extravaganza the dresses were charming, pretty, and graceful, as they were bound to be when those who executed them were governed by the chaste art of Planché; still, they did not possess the grandeur and dash of those we are accustomed to see now. What could have been more beautiful and magnificent than the International Congress of all the Porcelains by Wilhelm in the fairy spectacle of *Rothomago* at the Alhambra? And how striking, too, the transformation in pantomime! When Grimaldi was clown the harlequinade was the thing wherein to catch the notice of the public. No grand processions, gay crowds, and wealth of gorgeous costumes and loveliness then!

Simmons as Mother Goose.

Dainty little girl as Mother Goose.

Why, the famous Mother Goose was played by a man, and now, to be up to date, she must be something like this.

The present fashion of having in groups and sets nearly every dress of different design and colour is, although certainly more realistic, decidedly less effective than otherwise, giving the stage the appearance of a grand fancy dress hall; whereas the fewer colours, and those in large masses, must be like somebody's cocoa, both grateful and comforting—but in this case to the eye.

Another mistake, too, I venture to think, is that of managers having a passion for divinely tall ladies—on the stage; the stately creatures dwarf it. John Hollingshead, ever practical, knew this well enough; and with the exception of one fine "show girl" for Captain of the Guard or other high position, none of the ladies exceeded in height Miss Farren or Miss Kate Vaughan.

The public now-a-days look for artistic and beautiful dresses to brighten the stage, as did our ancestors in days of yore for the "snuffer man," and while such managers as the late Sir Augustus Harris, Sir Henry Irving, and Mr. Wilson Barrett are ever ready to lavish thought, energy, and capital on displaying them, they (the managers) need have no fear for the safety of their benches.

CRITICISM IN THE PROVINCES.

By Douglas Ginaodh.

IN my last sketch in *The Theatre* I endeavoured to suggest the character of provincial criticism, its methods and its shortcomings. On the present occasion I am concerned with the question, Why is it so? Look at the conditions in which provincial criticism is produced. The critics are divisible into three classes. First, there is the one who is specially employed for that kind of work; secondly, the reporter-critic; thirdly, the one who follows some occupation apart from criticism, and takes up this serious and important public duty as a "hobby," somewhat in the spirit of lawn-tennis, but less seriously. To him, another man's heart, soul, and life work are things to play with.

The first of these three kinds of critics is somewhat rare in the provinces, for provincial papers, with few exceptions, do not set special ability apart for criticism of any kind, unhampered by heavy work of other kinds. They cannot afford to do it. Their business is journalism, and properly so, too. But the great misfortune is that they do not treat dramatic criticism with the same serious care and attention that they bestow on other departments of their work. They pay specialists to treat of the share market, the bombast of Parliament, and the twists and turns of foreign politics; but the significance of the drama has not yet sufficiently impressed them for special treatment. It is not that there is any lack of the necessary talent in the provinces; it is that where such talent occurs it is not specialised, but devoted to other sorts of journalistic work, the drama becoming a secondary or still smaller consideration. And even where applied to the drama it is under conditions that make good criticism impossible. Beside, where such special ability has become to any considerable extent developed and matured, it tends to find its way to the capital, the

Mecca of our national genius, leaving the provincial gaps to be filled with such raw material as is at hand.

Next, think of the conditions under which the reporter-critic has to do his work. He goes to the office about eight o'clock in the morning, looks at the reporter's book, and finds there about six appointments standing against his name for the day. The places to be visited are at an average distance of two to three miles from the office. This means that he has to travel about a dozen miles, get through at least a dozen interviews, and think constantly and carefully over the accuracy of the information that he is collecting. In addition, he has to transcribe his notes. By the time an average healthy, active man has done this, his brain gets into that misty and indolent mood which kind Nature provides for his own sake. In that condition he sets off to the play, naturally, and very properly, bent upon relaxation rather than upon study, dramatic or otherwise. If his printed estimate looks loose and hazy next morning is it any wonder, even assuming him to be a Hazlitt, a Lamb, or an Archer?

Lastly, we have the man who makes no apology for treating dramatic art as a thing to trifle with. He is very often a bank clerk, with the thing called his mind completely made up as only a bank clerk knows how. As a rule, his consciousness has been bred among conventions, and if he could only be fully analysed, probably his "opinions" of the drama would be found influenced by the religious or lady-like preconceptions of his mother's great grandmother. What is not supplied to the repertory of his judgment by the superficialism of his female ancestors is made up from that shallow claptrap determined by the taste and culture of a modern middle-class drawing-room, where *The Sign of the Cross* is hysterically admired, and where *The Notorious Mrs. Ebbsmith* is condemned on moral grounds with a familiar instinct for the unclean which forces one to suspect the morality of those who condemn it. This hobby-critic is generally a gentlemanly person, with just enough genius to live among balance-sheets, and with just enough absence of genius to keep him there permanently. His intense gentlemanliness is generally in inverse proportion to his income; and as it is a gentlemanly thing to go to the theatre, he does so, and puts a guinea a week in his purse at the same time. It never occurs to him that, in the facts of his position as a bank-clerk-critic, he must either cheat his bank during the day by withholding his energy from his balance-sheets, or else cheat his editor during the night by attempting to do what would properly need the energy which he has left at the bank. It would be libellous to admit no exceptions to this generalisation, but such are the facts.

It would be as unjust as it is unnecessary to blame any of these critics individually, or even as a class. They conform to the conditions of their life like any other people. When we impartially review their intellectual environment and the decentralising method of their intellectual activity, their trifling attempts at dramatic criticism are most wonderful in that they are not still more trifling. As a general rule, the conditions of their work make their criticism a poor thing, and when any amongst them happens to rise above his conditions and produce work of a better kind, he is wanted in London, and is only too glad of the opportunity to go there. In a word, the critical faculty of a Matthew Arnold might live and die unnoticed in the incessantly hurried sphere of provincial journalism.

Thus we see how the blame does not rest primarily upon the critics, and so we have narrowed the location of its origin by another step. Having traced the drawbacks of provincial criticism as far as the newspapers, we now inquire whether it rests here, or is further traceable to another cause. The first essential function of an editor, provincial or otherwise, is to ascertain what the public desire to know, and to tell them. This, too, is a function which is very well fulfilled on the whole. An intelligent man, with his income and his professional reputation dependent on it, may be trusted not to go very far wrong in the selection and treatment of his subject-matter in accordance with the desires of his public. He may preach, of course, and generally does; but he is primarily a reporter of public information, and even in his preaching he takes necessarily shrewd care to keep in touch with those whom he addresses. If the drama interested the public as deeply or as widely as they are interested by politics or penny horribles, then it would be equally his business to write up the drama. Nor can he be blamed for so acting. The moment he ceases so to act, his paper fails to live up to the reason of its existence, his employer's property is endangered, and his own position and capacity are professionally discredited. The destruction of newspapers and the ruin of their editors are sacrifices that cannot well be demanded for such small good as they could do by recommending the drama to unresponsive minds. Beside, if only for the sake of the drama itself, it is better that the papers and the editors should live and continue such small services as they are enabled to render to it, rather than commit suicide in futile attempts to increase the value of those services. Editors, as a body, are badly misunderstood, and if those who feel astonished because they do not publish this, that, and the other thing were only to see how they are placed, their astonishment would be excited rather by what is actually accomplished. Thus,

I arrive at the apparently impossible position of asserting that criticism in the provinces is in a bad way, and that the critics and the editors are alike free from primary blame. Those who accurately understand the nature and conditions of their work will be very ready to admit that the editors and their assistants are only too glad to publish a better kind of criticism the moment it is called for by a sufficiently large proportion of their readers.

The fact is that the drawbacks of provincial criticisms are chiefly due to the appreciations of the provincial playgoers. Criticism, like calico, is regulated to a great extent by supply and demand, alike in quantity and quality. You cannot give more of it or a better quality of it than your public demand of you. You may, of course, help your public in some degree to understand the value of improved quality, and even cultivate a taste in them for it; but granting this to be the primary aim of a journal, which it is not, the practical value of your achievements would still be limited by your audience. For proof of this we need only notice the instructive line that marks out the highly "successful" critic as distinct from the studious or profound one. It is almost too obvious to need reassertion that our most successful critics of to-day are persons of commonplace instinct and organisation, whose nature and appreciation enable them to reflect the tastes, feelings, and judgments of the greatest number of readers. And competent judgment objects to measuring the value of criticism by the law of majorities.

Take three recent illustrations showing how powerless the best criticism may be against the popular verdict. We all know that *The Sign of the Cross* is among the most successful plays of modern times, while the most superficial judgment must see that it is as devoid of true dramatic art as it is successful. The same observation will apply to *Trilby*, that inane compromise between a clever book and a fine array of stage carpentering. Perhaps the most astounding example of the three is *The Prisoner of Zenda*, another literary compromise. It is a mixture of Sancho Panza, melodrama, ancient jokes and modern epigrams. However, it is an immensely successful entertainment, and a dramatic masterpiece of the first order would stand no chance against it in popular estimation. The dramatising of novels never did and never can produce great plays. What, then, can criticism do but drag its feeble life along, hoping for a day when the public may see distinctions between the real article and the shoddy compounds that they now mistake for dramatic art? It is practically the same in the provinces and elsewhere in so far as this aspect of the matter is concerned.

And the remedy? I have no Morrison's pill. I am concerned

rather with the diagnosis. The remedies, whatever they be, must be as varied as the causes, and I have said enough to suggest that the causes are very varied. Perhaps the best remedy of all is in pointing out, as I have tried to do, the various influences that operate against the evolution of dramatic appreciation in the provinces.

By T. Edgar Pemberton.

IN the September number of *The Theatre* there was an article by Mr. Douglas Ginaodh, entitled "Criticism in the Provinces," and I feel constrained to reply to some of his strictures, not so much in self-defence as on behalf of the many straightforward, painstaking, and eminently capable provincial critics whom it is my good fortune to know. Mr. Ginaodh tells us that he was *once* the dramatic critic of "a provincial paper in one of our most important cities" (a "paper above the average of its kind, and one of the oldest journals in the country"), but as he was called upon to deal with *The Sign of the Cross*, it is evident that his appointment has only just come to a termination, and that in saying *once* he is dealing with quite recent times. Certainly, it was an unenviable position, for it appears that his editor (who was also, he declares, "above the average of his kind") would not let him write anything but honeyed praise, and that when the heavy villain of a melodrama, who considered that he had been unkindly dealt with, called at the office "with a terrible scowl on his face and a corresponding stick in his hand," told him that he would have to "protect *artists*" from him. This editor, Mr. Ginaodh tells us, "had his readers and his advertisements to consider, besides several other deep concerns that were then beyond me;" but "I do not blame him," he adds, "he worked to the conditions that governed him. I do not blame the proprietors; they can be trusted to know what is essential to the success of their newspaper. I do not blame myself; my fitness for the work was admittedly not below the average. For the present I blame nothing, but desire to describe and suggest the state of dramatic criticism in the provinces." Mr. Ginaodh goes on to do this, and he comes to the conclusion that "on the whole, provincial dramatic criticism is a sadly insufficient thing, hampered by various limitations that ought to be removed." Now I contend that this is far too sweeping an assertion. Hampered editors and revengeful heavy villains, such as Mr. Ginaodh has met, should certainly be removed; but surely his experiences in these directions are unique? As far as my knowledge on the subject (and it is a fairly wide one) goes,

provincial editors, having satisfied themselves that the writers they engage to "do" their criticisms are straightforward men who understand their work, leave them with perfectly free hands to praise or blame as they see fit. If their work is dishonestly or badly done it will be quickly found out, and there will be an end of it. In many ways the duty of the provincial critic differs from that of the London critic. In London different theatres are identified with different classes of entertainment, and the playgoer knows exactly what to expect at the Adelphi, the Gaiety, at the Lyceum, and so on to the end of the chapter. In the provinces, melodrama, musical farce, and dramatic fare of the highest class follow each other with bewildering incongruity. It is, then, one of his duties to let his readers know the class of play that is being acted in the town. He must remember that he is writing for the pit and gallery as well as dress circle and stalls, and if he is careful he will, without being either too severe or over-fulsome, be able to let playgoers of all tastes know whether they had better go to the theatre "this week," or keep their money in their pockets until something else comes along. Biron's words in *Love's Labour Lost*—

"A critic; nay, a night-watch constable"

are useful ones for him to bear in mind. He rarely has to deal with new plays, and it is foolish of him to air his own supposed superiority by sneering at the London successes with which he has to deal. The London failures have a knack of staying at home. When he does have to deal with a new piece destined for production in London, he will, if he is the experienced man that he ought to be, find that he has written a foretaste of what will ultimately be said about it. When he sees anything that should be condemned on the stage he should of course point it out in no half-measured terms; but, on the other hand, he should not, in order to show his own knowledge, be unduly ill-natured. If he expects to see everything as well done in the comparatively low-priced provincial houses as in the expensive west-end theatres he is foolish and unfit for his task. Mr. Ginaodh is very severe on a critic who confessed that in his notices he records the manner in which plays are received by audiences. Surely a critic has a duty to perform towards authors and actors, as well as towards playgoers? Certain forms of dramatic entertainment are, to say the least of it, very wearisome to me, but if they give undoubted pleasure to the large majority of the house, and are as a matter of consequence rapturously applauded, I should (provided there is nothing objectionable in them) certainly fail in my duty if I did not let that fact be known.

Besides, if one only look for it, there is something of good almost always to be found. In one of his speeches Charles Dickens, who was a giant amongst critics, said: "I have tried to recollect whether I had ever been in any theatre in my life from which I had not brought away some pleasant association, however poor the theatre; and I protest, out of my varied experience, I could not remember even one from which I had not brought some favourable impression."

In conclusion, let me say that I have never met Mr. Ginaodh's advance agent and manager whose "gooseberry champagne" is "pungent and sparkling, and so like the real article that it often produces the desired effect." I am inclined to think that he must devote himself exclusively to Mr. Ginaodh's late editor, and that the heavy villain with the scowl and the stick is in possession of the grim secret. From the tone of Mr. Ginaodh's article, one can gather that he is a good and earnest critic, and I hope he is now writing under more elastic conditions.

By Harold Lewis.

PROVINCIAL dramatic criticism has been written about from various points of view, but never, so far as I am aware, from that of a responsible provincial journalist. My title to so speak of it is that I have been editor for nearly twenty years of newspapers, first in one and then in another western city, and during that time have written my own dramatic criticisms, if I may use the term without conceit. It is necessary at the outset to remove one common misconception. It is impossible to generalise upon the subject of provincial criticism, any more than upon provincial theatres or provincial audiences. The homes of the drama in the provinces range from fit-ups in seaside and market town assembly rooms to theatres of the very highest class.

Attendant circumstances vary accordingly, and a very green youth in a remote country town may succumb to the glamour of the footlights, and adopt as his own the glowing expressions with regard to the show suggested by the fluent and to him awe-inspiring London gentleman in charge of it. But I have never met the acting manager, described in *The Theatre* last month, who offered money for extended notices, while those who attempt indirect bribery by free seats and other attentions are extremely rare. First-class touring managers would not long have any use for agents who were so indiscreet. The most troublesome individual I remember in this respect was the husband of a prima

donna; he was received with courtesy, but voted a nuisance. I had a solitary experience many years ago of an acting manager who wanted the newspaper boycotted for the rest of the week, in revenge for severe criticism, but the resident manager very firmly requested him to mind his own business.

Many newspapers, unfortunately, rank the theatre notice no higher than as an irksome duty to be performed, because there is an advertisement, and perhaps, therefore, there are some managers who regard it in the same commercial spirit. But even then reporters are independent, and write a very fair descriptive paragraph, which compares favourably with the provincial notices in theatrical newspapers. But, on the other hand, there are great daily papers whose criticisims are as fearless, as thoughtful, and as competent as could be wished. Not only is it due to the position of the press that they should be so, not only is it in the interests of dramatic art, but even from the mercenary box-office point of view it is advantageous, for it enables the papers to influence public recognition of a good thing. Playgoers are never swayed by an obsequious flatterer. A former manager once suggested to me that I had been rather cruel to what he admitted was a bad production. I pointed out that, if a man once paid to see a play, on a newspaper representation that it was good, and found it to be bad, he would never believe that paper again, whereas a conscientious critic is sure to command a following. That manager proved this in time for himself, and a year or two after, when the turmoil of a general election, or something of the sort, caused the theatre to be somewhat neglected, he begged me to be sure to give him a notice on Tuesday, however unfavourable, because many of his patrons waited for the opinion of their newspaper.

To come to the special limitations of provincial criticism, I question whether it is right, in any circumstances, to set out to demonstrate your own cleverness by devoting your attention to all the defects, however minute, that you can discover. There may be reason for microscopic analysis in a professional or technical journal, but the general reader wants to learn what the play is like, or what you think of the performance as a whole. Moreover, in the provinces a large proportion of the public belong to the class who have a strong prejudice against the stage and know nothing of it, and I do not think it would be fair to write in a strain which would give the enemy cause to blaspheme. Moreover, in criticising the opening performance for the week of a touring company you are dealing with actors and actresses who may have just come off a long railway journey or even a sea voyage, and a proportion of whom are sure to be strange to that

particular theatre. This especially applies to the musical pieces now popular. The public, I know, is not to be expected to make any allowance, but a critic does not wish to pounce upon a temporary blemish.

My opinion, therefore, is that a conscientious critic should never pen a word of praise that he does not feel to be thoroughly deserved. But while he gives all the praise that is due he need not be so exhaustive in fault finding. Grave defects must, of course, be pointed out, or his work would be valueless, but on minor points he can afford to be a little kind. This may seem casuistical, but it is not. If he is fairly consistent, playgoers who read his articles regularly soon learn to deduce from his opinion of a new play how it will appeal to their tastes. As a dramatic student myself, I know certain London critics do me this service.

There is one other point which affects the player more than the public. A bare statement that So-and-So is unsatisfactory, or bad, or atrocious, amounts to an abuse of journalism. It is sentence without a charge being stated. But if the reason for disapproval is given, the actor can profit by the criticism, if he thinks it worth listening to, while if he can satisfy himself it is mistaken or ill-informed, his "withers are unwrung."

Of course, the lot of the candid friend is not always a happy one, and he will often find that undiscriminating praise is more grateful to the objects of it than thoughtful criticism, but he will not find this the case with true artists. A gentleman once in my hearing spoke to Sir Henry Irving with the evident idea that he would regard the critic who pointed out a blemish in one of his productions much in the same light as the German Emperor would do. I need scarcely add that our leading actor set him right in a manner which was as graceful as it was decisive. Men and women whose position is less assured must be excused if they feel hurt at the time of a slating, but it seldom rankles long. If the critic is right, they will protest none the less strongly, but they will set to work to guard themselves against similar objections in the future.

In criticism, as in ordinary affairs, the man who is squeezable is nowhere, but the man who conscientiously pursues a consistent course soon finds his motive appreciated and his independence respected, even in the provinces. But one thing he must avoid like the plague, and that is giving anyone the right to say that he is malicious or inspired by personal feeling, for then his influence is gone, not only with the players, but also with the public. There is here another reason for keeping within the mark in the bestowal of blame. There is no greater proof of a judicial frame of mind than in not pushing an adverse argument to extremities,

and this is more widely and readily apprehended than might be imagined.

BRICHANTEAU, COMÉDIEN.

By H. Hamilton Fyfe.

M. CLARETIE'S new book is deservedly enjoying a great success. With a little more elaboration, with a scheme more coherent, and with treatment more detailed, yet at the same time rather broader and bolder, it would have been a great work. As it stands, it is a collection of admirable *esquisses*, full of humour and pathos, presenting a series of vivid pictures of contemporary manners, and written, it is needless to say, with that distinction and happiness of phrase which characterise all that comes from the pen of the director of the Comédie Française. No man can know better than M. Claretie the theatrical world of France, and his keen sympathy for all that pertains to it, combined with the talent of the practised man of letters for seizing upon the salient points of character, and indicating the eccentricities of temperament without straining after crude effect or laborious analysis, give him the power to set forth as few else could such episodes as those he gives us in this study of a French actor's life and personality.

He is not a success, our poor M. Brichanteau; far from it. The bright dreams of his youth are never fulfilled. Passing from one provincial theatre to another, driven to accept engagements at the smaller Parisian playhouses, brought at last to the necessity of finding employment as "starter" at a bicycle-racing establishment, he is gradually forced to realise that he is one of those who have been left behind in the race of life. Yet never for a moment does he allow despair to seize upon him. Even in his sorest straits he is upheld by the memories of a past which, by the enchantment of distance, seems to have been full and glorious. Even in the last stage of his pathetic career, he keeps a brave heart, can undertake heroic labours to aid a comrade, can still face the world with a smile. "Les rêves bleus sont envolés," he says, but *nil desperandum.* "Le théâtre m'a donné les illusions dans ma jeunesse; sur mes vieux jours le vélodrome me donnera du pain!" In spite of his ill success, you cannot but believe that once upon a time Brichanteau could act—and act well, too. His accounts of this and that "triumph"—for the most part the old fellow tells his own story—carry so much conviction that it is impossible not to feel at the telling a thrill which makes you accept at least a fair proportion of what he says as record

of actual fact. His amusing relation, for instance, of the circumstances which led to his appearance in a county town as Louis XI. and the enthusiasm his performance evoked, is so spirited, and appeals so strongly to that sympathy which all of us have for the man who suddenly gets his chance and profits by it unexpectedly, that one feels positive as to the truth of the main outline of the narrative, and willing to credit Brichanteau with almost as great a triumph as he claims to have had. One must not, however, lose sight of the "almost." It is not only actors who exaggerate their successes, it is true; but have they not a way, many of them, of expatiating so vividly and picturesquely upon their achievements, —the artistic temperament so carries them away in a torrent of enthusiastic phrases—that it is necessary to discount a little their own descriptions, and on calm reflection to admit sadly that the gingerbread cannot have been quite so magnificently gilded as they represent? Thus it is, at any rate, with Brichanteau. If all happened as he relates it, why, one asks, did the favourable opportunities he longed for never present themselves? Such a reception at Compiègne must have led to similar glories elsewhere. Paris must have been stirred, and finally the doors of the Maison de Molière must have been flung wide to receive the new genius. But alas! this was never destined to be the order of things; and although our Brichanteau was an actor of no mean order (nothing shall ever disabuse my mind of this belief), and a true artist at heart, he sank instead of rising, and never came near to attaining the longed-for position of *sociétaire*, or even to securing a modest competence in a less exalted sphere. It was characteristic of him that he himself should attribute his failure to his magnificent voice. "Trop de voix et pas assez de chance," he says, "voilà mon lot;" and he tells humorously how, when at last he had persuaded his father—a clerk in the mayor's office at Versailles—to overcome his mother's religious scruples against the actor's vocation, he thundered out before the election committee of the Conservatoire a speech from Oreste. "Moi, j'ai tonné, littéralement tonné," he tells his companions when he has passed through the ordeal, and to this he sets down all his troubles as being due. Drafted into the tragedy class of M. Beauvallet, he shouted down his professor on all occasions, and so persistently made use of his "voix d'obusier," that soon "Ce garçon-là n'a que de la voix" became the opinion current concerning his abilities. "Alas," says poor Brichanteau, "they heard my voice, but they could not see my heart. I had a big voice, it is true; but had I not also faith, ambition, and devotion to my art?" The label attached to him thus early—"l'homme au

tonnerre "—stuck to him through life, and finally, by the irony of circumstance, gained for him the post in which he ends his days, "en criant 'allez' de cette belle voix qui jalousait M. Beauvallet et qui est demeurée superbe."

His voice, too, was the unhappy cause of the breaking off of his first love affair with the little *ingénue*, Jenny Valadon, otherwise Mdlle. Viola. They toured together with the most fortunate results—he as *jeune premier*, she as *jeune première*. But alas! in their scenes together Jenny's voice seemed "like that of a lark singing in a thunder-storm." In vain she strove to raise it, to produce a volume of sound more equal to his. She strained her lungs, grew scarlet with the exertion, and when in the fifth act of *Hernani* she had to say "Je suis pâle, dis-moi, pour une fiancée," the audience shouted with laughter at the contrast offered between her words and her appearance. "Pâle, pauvre enfant, pâle? Une tomate!" says poor Brichanteau, with a touch of humour in the midst of his sadness. The end of it was, of course, that Mr. Actor and Jenny had to part. The doctor predicted consumption in three months, and she took to comedy, leaving her robust lover to pursue the course of tragedy and romantic drama upon which he had embarked.

A touching episode in the book is that which tells of Brichanteau's devotion to a young sculptor of some talent (according to Brichanteau, of surpassing genius, but this was only to be expected), whom he found playing the horn in a theatrical orchestra. Too poor to hire a model for his great work, "Le soldat romain humilié sous le joug Gaulois," he is beginning to despair of ever finishing it, when the good-natured actor offers to act as model. Throughout the winter he keeps the poor lad alive, and at last the statue is finished and sent to the Salon. But the very day on which the notice of its acceptance is sent out is the day of the sculptor's burial, and henceforth Brichanteau determines to do all he can to obtain for his friend the recognition, after death, of the talent which had lain hid during the few and evil days of his life. Failing to induce the national authorities to purchase the statue for the Luxembourg, he at last prevails upon the Municipality of Garigat-sur-Garonne, the birthplace of the sculptor, to have it cast in bronze for erection in a public place. But in this, as in his career, Brichanteau is doomed to failure. Local disputes prevent the voting of the money for its proper disposal, and Brichanteau's final effort—a benefit performance, of which the proceeds were to be divided between providing for an old comrade and setting up the *soldat romain* (no other, of course, than Brichanteau himself) at Garigat-sur-Garonne—came terribly to

grief. One after another, all those failed who had promised their aid, and, in the end, the whole programme consisted of Brichanteau *seul*, while the proceeds did not even suffice to pay the expenses that had been incurred.

Of the many capital theatrical anecdotes in the book I must confine myself to quoting one which is perhaps as good as any. On the occasion of the great performance of *Louis XI.* already mentioned, Brichanteau undertook the title-part at a moment's notice, the distinguished member of the Théâtre Français who was billed for the part having lost his costume-basket on the railway, and having declined absolutely to appear without his usual dress ; upon which Brichanteau, torn by conflicting emotions, remarks with delightful naïveté that, though he could not blame M. Talbot for taking up this attitude, an actor owes something to the public as well as to his art ! Brichanteau has, of course, to improvise a dress, in which task he is assisted by an old actor, who makes up the famous Louis XI. hat, surrounded with the effigies of saints, which all who have seen the play must remember, out of a cavalryman's forage cap and a dozen lead soldiers ! Of this old actor it is related that once, having to play *Hernani* in a theatre which possessed no cloth representing a picture-gallery, he went through the whole of the famous scene in which Ruy Gomez points out the portraits of his ancestors with a photograph album in his hand ! Thus, looking at one *carte de visite*, he exclaimed :

"Ecoutez ! Des Silva
C'est l'aîné, c'est l'aïeul, l'ancêtre, le grand homme !
Don Silvius, qui fut trois fois consul de Rome !"

Then he turned a page.

"Voici Ruy Gomez de Silva
Grand maître de Saint Jacques et de Calabrana."

Then he turned another page, and, with a deep sigh,

"Cette tête sacrée
C'est mon père. Il fut grand, quoi qu'il vint le dernier."

And he showed to the astonished Don Carlos a recent photograph of some relation of the manager to whom the album belonged !

Of Brichanteau's various exploits, on which there is no room to touch here, all who are interested in *la vie théatrale* must read for themselves—his great quarrel with a provincial dramatic critic—" le Jules Janin de Rivesaltes ; " his *affaire de cœur* with an Englishwoman of title, an æsthete with a sporting husband ; his spirited account of his great plot in 1871 for securing the person of the German Emperor by means borrowed from the romantic drama ; the very entertaining sketch

of an actor's funeral, at which one of the *orateurs* criticises the deceased comedian in unsparing terms, while the other, in a state of abject nervousness, takes out and begins to read, not the speech he has prepared, but his part in a new burlesque. Each and all of M. Claretie's clever chapters contain much to amuse and to interest, while the portrait he draws of a typical *comédien*, as Brichanteau undoubtedly is, deserves exceedingly high praise as a study of character. It now remains for M. Claretie to give us a companion picture of the actor who has "arrived"—a man of another type. He cannot well present us with a figure who will appeal more to our sympathies, and find a warmer corner in our hearts, than Brichanteau; but there can be no doubt that he will interest us. Such a book as this must inevitably leave the public, like Oliver Twist, impatiently asking for more.

THE KID-GLOVE CRITIC.

By a Mere Journalist.

IN the *Pall Mall Gazette* the other day one read the following: "There are people called dramatic critics who must go to first nights by way of business. Now, man may not live by criticism alone, and it is not unreasonable to assume that dramatic critics have other sides to their lives than sitting in stalls—that they sometimes have social engagements, that they sometimes wish to go down to the country or to go abroad. Is it asking very much if they should wish to know, say, a fortnight beforehand, on what particular night they are required to be in London and disengaged? It is not pleasant, if you are packing to go away for a few days, or have just written to invite a long-lost schoolfellow to dinner next Thursday, to receive a ticket negativing every such enjoyment."

No; it is not pleasant to have one's social pleasures thus interrupted and perhaps dispersed. The life of the professional playgoer is, confessedly, not all beer and skittles. There is always an element of uncertainty in theatrical affairs, and I have known cases—not very frequent, perhaps, but annoying when they occur—in which productions have been postponed at only an hour or two's notice, with the result that more than one newspaper writer has gone to the theatre and been turned empty away. Courtesy would suggest that in such extreme instances the telegraph wire should be utilised; though even then it does not follow that the journalists addressed will be within call: they

may not be at home when the telegram arrives there, they may be busy elsewhere.

But what would you? If you follow a certain calling, you must accept the conditions under which it exists. If you accept the duty of assessing theatrical productions, you must govern your ways accordingly. It is to be feared that the writer in the *Pall Mall Gazette* is but a kid-glove critic—an amateur, in fact—who does but condescend to visit the theatre in the intervals of more pleasing, if not more important, business. If he were a genuine working journalist he would know that it is practically impossible for managers to give, in every case, a fortnight's definite notice of the first performance of a piece. When this can be done, it *is* done, for it is to the interest of every *entrepreneur* to secure publicly the date he covets. But in most instances this cannot be done. Play-production is not a mechanical affair; and it is apt to be delayed or disturbed by such things as the illness of a leading player, managerial changes in the cast, the sudden throwing-up of parts, the non-arrival of scenery or costumes, and so forth. After all, it is better that a manager should not make pre nature announcements than that, advertising early a date for his *première*, he should by-and-bye be obliged to alter it. If it is distressing for *Pall Mall* critics to be kept waiting for announcements, it must be still more trying for them to be obliged to cancel engagements they have made.

But, as I say, a man must follow his profession or leave it alone. If he undertakes to report upon plays, he must be prepared to do his spiriting whenever, as well as wherever, he is called upon. He is not obliged to go to the theatre at all if he does not care about it. If he finds theatrical criticism interfere with social enjoyments, why does he not give it up? Nobody asks him to make a martyr of himself. Managers don't want martyrs at the theatre—as a matter of fact, it is of the essence of fair comment that the critic should approach his subject from a sympathetic standpoint. Criticism should be done *con amore*, or not at all. What are we to think, for example, of such an utterance as the following, which appeared the other day in the *Star*, over the signature of "Spectator"? "The thought that my little holiday is all spent, and that for another weary year I shall have to undergo a continuous course of heavy Shaksperean revivals, crude melodramas, twopenny-halfpenny farces, and fiddle-faddle 'musical comedies'—with, perhaps, just one out of the whole lot that is really worth abandoning pipe and fireside slippers for—this horrid thought depresses my spirits."

Of course one need not take too seriously this little outburst of pessimistic petulance, but it illustrates the state of mind in

which a certain class of critic goes to the theatre. He goes bored, or expecting to be bored. He would rather be at home with that pipe and those fireside slippers. Well, why does he not follow his inclination? If he did so, the world would still go round; plays would be produced, and audiences would go to see them. It is perfectly well known that few of the theatrical critics confine their labours to theatrical work; some of them are men of letters, and pass most of their time at their desks; some "do" journalism of a miscellaneous sort; a few, it is understood, are so fortunate as to have positions "under Government." Now, one can quite conceive that a gentleman "under Government," after grinding away (as we know they all do, poor fellows!) from ten till four, would rather spend the evening *chez lui* than within the walls of a playhouse and a newspaper office. Well, why doesn't he? What is wanted in theatrical judgments is not the spirit of the kid-glove critic, but that of the expert and the enthusiast. Theatrical criticism should be produced by those who take pleasure in producing it — who produce it, also, as a business, and not by way of ineffable condescension.

Moreover, theatrical criticism should be free from all suspicion of mere paltry anger. "Since critics are human," says the *Pall Mall* writer above quoted, "it is unwise of managers to compel them to go to the theatre with some broken engagement rankling within them." The remark is significant of the mood in which newspaper notices may sometimes be written. Editors should take care that their representatives do not indulge themselves in moods like this.

IN THE NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY.

By Percy Fitzgerald.

THE new National Portrait Gallery has a particular interest for the stage lover, owing to the presence there of a number of striking faces, of eminent players and dramatists. To find ourselves in such company is the next best thing to having the originals before us. From constant practice in "making faces"—Elia's phrase—the actor is, of course, better trained in the difficult art of expression; his face becomes more mobile, and more the exact reflection of what is within, than anyone else's. This "face-making" is, indeed, his profession, or an important part of it. A careless walk through this interesting gallery will show us many curious things and raise many a ghost.

The large portrait of John Philip Kemble shows Sir Thomas Lawrence's dramatic instinct. It is, perhaps, the picture which has made the great actor's figure or "person" familiar to the public, and conveys well the old stately system of acting, as contrasted with the familiar everyday tone and attitude of modern performances. It dwells in the memory; the face is finely expressive, and we feel that we are in presence of a prince. Not so much can be said for the rather homely figure of his great sister, in the companion portrait, showing her as a very "humdrum" solidly built lady. This, however, is the work of a less celebrated artist, Sir W. Beechey. *En revanche*, we recall the unapproached Tragic Muse, done by a greater painter, when she was at the zenith of her power and refinement. In another room there is a small half length of Kemble, exhibiting him as a very "gentlemanly" personage, and with some of that "distinction" for which he was notable.

Perhaps the most striking and brilliant portrait of the collection is the wonderful half-length of Garrick, by Pine, an artist little known save to the "inner circle." This work would hold its own in any gallery for its original pose, the dramatic fire and life of the face, and its perfect expression of what we know of Garrick's talent. Here is the piercing glance of the eyes, which seemed to dart fire, as he probed his companion through and through, as though searching out his innermost thoughts. This difficult and complex situation is conveyed in masterly style and with the utmost freedom and spirit. It may be said that of all the innumerable portraits of the actor—he and Sir Henry Irving are, perhaps, the most bepainted of the profession—this is the most striking, and the one we would exhibit to anyone who would know what manner of man he was.

In these days, when the "rage for Romneys" is prevailing to an extravagant pitch, peculiar interest attaches to so fine a specimen as the richly-toned figure of Cumberland, the dramatist. He is seated in a careless dilettante attitude, with an air of tranquil musing, half inquiry, and yet also with a meditative look of superiority. The plum-coloured coat is a fine bit of colour, a feast to the eye, and suggests Fischer, the oboe player, at Hampton Court, by Gainsborough. Yet the tint does not dim the thoughtful face with its peculiar and difficult expression. This was surely a most gentlemanly dramatist, and there is not a sign of the restless malice which distinguished Sir Fretful Plagiary.

We may remark a general similarity in the many portraits of Woffington (there are now living, by the way, descendants of "Peg's" sister, one of them a friend of my own). Here are re-

fined and delicate features, with a sort of gentle face, yet "Peg" could be vociferous even when anyone interfered with her on the stage. Here we see her *in bed*—an odd selection of pose—with quilted satin counterpane, laced pillow, and crimson curtains. She evidently thought it a becoming situation, for there is a picture in the Garrick collection showing her under the same conditions. Extreme delicacy, indeed all the tokens of bad health, are visible. It is highly characteristic of the woman that she should have sat, or lain, under such conditions. But "Peg" will always be a popular character.

One of the most striking and original things in the place is that singular curio—for such it is—in one of the upper rooms, the head or bust of Colley Cibber, wrought in plaster, and coloured *ad vivum* in an almost startling way. It is said to be the work of the always spirited and dashing Roubiliac, who modelled it for his friend Kitty Clive, who gave it to Horace Walpole. Displaying the usual vigour and "go" of the artist—if his it be—it is more wonderful for its strangely natural colouring. It seems a living thing, with the careless cap "bundled on" anyhow, the folded white neck-cloth, the embroidered vest, and easy folds of the coat. The mouth is intensely vulgar, if not mean, with a touch of humorous malignity (he must have been a low sort of fellow); yet it has a coarse *finesse*. The face is well worth studying and gains on you; and it leaves a strange feeling as you look on it. We have been hearing so much of Colley and his fine comedies—seemingly an abstraction—and might fairly wonder what he was like; but here he *is*. It might be said he is not so like the fine Grisoni portrait in the Garrick Club; but there he is overwhelmed by a full-bottomed wig, which overpowers his face. He seems venomous enough, particularly in the mouth, for all his quarrelling with the viperous Pope, What makes us doubt whether it be Roubiliac's work is that it lacks his clear, clean, and vivid touch; it seems a little too coarse and heavy,

Here we come on Arthur Murphy—friend of Johnson and the Thrales—a clever sprightly dramatist and a gay companion. He lived to a good old age, ever maundering over the great personages he had known, the "immortal Garrick" included—and the ingratitude he had been treated with. But who cannot see in his face and figure, in the moist eye, the old jovial companion—accountable for many a tumbler of punch—something in the Costigan way? "Nice, dear boy, anything ye want I'll do for you!" Some years ago there were people alive who had talked with him. And here is O'Keefe, another Irishman, with roguishly humorous face, a twinkle in his eye, the humour lurking at the corners of his expressive mouth.

One of the most delightful pictures in the collection—perhaps one of the best painted—is assuredly that of Home, the author of *Douglas*. It is by Raeburn, the Scotch Reynolds, whose matchless and always secure brush worked straight to the end in view, and never made a mistake. A delightful Scotch face, slightly "pawkey," shrewd, and self-satisfied, he feeling he was the "celebrated Mr. Home." As to the painting, the artist never did anything better. No doubt he rose to the occasion; the modelling of the face, the clear limpid tones of the colours, the firm touch are all masterly.

Here, too, is Fawcett, a most respectable weighty man, actor, and stage manager, what not, as indeed we can see from this capital head, which suggests that of our late worthy Henry Howe. Fawcett, like him, had an admirable "stage face," as it is called, that is in good and marked relief, so as to convey his expression and catch the shadows. He was a good man of business too. Then we turn to another fellow of infinite jest, George Colman the younger, limned by Gainsborough, in his favourite "streaky" bluish way—we know the tone—as exhibited in a coat. What delicacy in the face! But *was* Colman so refined as this shows him? He might be some *elegant* or a drawing-room poet. The eye seems wrapt, his thoughts travelling far away. Grimaldi shows plainly his Italian origin by the small head and insignificant figure, the dark hair and skin.

One likes the squire-like face of Smith the actor—rosy as one who loved his part—and who bore the flattering title of "Gentleman Smith." Evidently a good companion and a good dresser, but not much to be relied on, as Garrick found *re* Mrs. Hartley. Near him is Kitty Stephens the singer, with her flowing black curls, and a face rather brilliant and full of expression. That capital sound painter Jackson, R.A., was the artist—all his ladies' portraits leave a feeling of satisfaction. There is rather a poorish copy of the familar Goldsmith portrait by Reynolds. No face is so recognisable by all, owing, no doubt, to the engravings. His countryman and co-dramatist Sheridan has the same thoroughly weak mouth—indeed, most of the family have it more or less, a full and irregular one, as though the gums were too large for the containing skin. Miss O'Neill, if we trust her smooth placid face, cannot have been exactly a genius, but she had a wonderful attraction and simulated the passions effectively. She had a strange resemblance to the Princess Charlotte. Her face, evidently, is that of a person who would not let herself be much disturbed by anything. Witness the fact that an early marriage, on the flush of her success, with-

drew her from the stage. It has always been said that Thackeray's Miss Costigan was an exact picture of the actress. Nor should we pass by the full, round face of Betterton—with his portly figure; nor that of Mrs. Oldfield, the "Nance" whom Miss Terry portrays so effectively. A rather hard face, yet with a suggestion of Miss Rehan's expression. These are a selection of the more striking "pieces," such as attract us on a first survey. The Director, too, deserves praise for the fashion in which he has distributed, so to speak, the interest of this gallery.

A WORD ON THE DEFUNCT DRAMA.

By Robert Buchanan.

SEVERAL years ago, when the cry of the crotchet-monger was loudest in the land, and the apostles of sexmania were prophesying the advent of the New Drama and the apotheosis of H. Ibsen, I ventured to suggest that the only result of so ill-advised and uninstructed a crusade in favour of so-called edification might be a speedy restoration of once popular and scarcely forgotten methods. The indiscretion, the impertinence, and the persistency of the noisy group of quidnuncs have, in fact, done far more damage to dramatic art than I anticipated. So sick has the public grown of the very idea of edification, so absurd have been proved the pretensions of those dramatists who foolishly followed where the quidnuncs led, that the hope of a rational drama, dealing with the great issues of modern life, has been adjourned *sine die*, and the very phrase "problem-play" is already a term of managerial as well as critical execration. A glance at the programmes of our leading theatres is sufficient to prove the recrudescence of despised fashions. Variety shows, "go-as-you-please" musical pieces, and farcical comedies divide, with "paste-and-scissors" adaptations of romantic novelettes, the honours of theatrical popularity. *Trilby* frolics barefooted over the grave of *Hedda Gabler*, and the spectre of Dumas the elder strides jackbooted past the urn of our well-cremated *Mrs. Tanqueray*. Serious dramatic art, in short, is as dead as Home Rule. Its fate was sealed when the quidnuncs threw in their lot with Puritanism, Phariseeism, and the Nonconformist Conscience, and proved in so doing that their clamour for dramatic improprieties was merely a new expression of puritanical hate for the joy of life. Wisely enough, the public has decided that the theatre is a place for public amusement, not a differentiated hall of science or debating forum.

And yet, when all is said and done, a great opportunity has been missed—a possibility of dramatic progress indefinitely postponed. Much as one may exult over the discomfiture of Mr. A. B. Walkley and all the loose-tongued tribe of amateur critics, one cannot quite accept with equanimity the triumph of Mr. George Edwardes and the *Daily Telegraph*. There was surely a golden mean between the ethics of the Lock Hospital and the empirics of Bank Holiday tumblings in the hay? Even St. Ibsen was preferable in some respects to the caperings of Mr. Arthur Roberts, the posings of Miss Hetty Hamer, and the mock-heroics of Mr. Anthony Hope. One has grown very tired indeed of hearing, on the authority of the largest circulation, that the explosion of Maxim guns, the pipings of Miss Letty Lind, the humours of Japanese "tea-houses," and the delights of the Empire promenade, are healthy signs of dramatic virility, because they are "true," so "human." It is a far cry indeed from the gloomy experiments of the Théâtre Libre to the bewildering orgies of an English Moulin Rouge.

The outcome of the whole matter is that, now as of old, the healthy evolution of public amusement has been prevented by too much *ad captandum* criticism. The critics who clamoured for edification, for the setting-up of their own little standard of taste, have wrestled noisily with the critics who found the "joy of life" in the Empire promenade, and "humanity" in the masterpieces of Drury Lane; and the result has been distracting and in a certain sense disastrous. The bewildered dramatist, certain of execration from one side or the other, sure that if he secures the approval of Mr. Bernard Shaw he will earn the contempt of Mr. Clement Scott, either drifts aimlessly from one experiment to another, or sits paralysed at his desk and is silent altogether. Informed by the ubiquitous entrepreneur that "problem-plays" are out of fashion, and fully aware that any serious drama whatever is now classed by the managerial intelligence as a "problem-play," he knows not where to turn or what to do. Mr. Pinero has been dumb for over a twelvemonth, Mr. Sydney Grundy has been merely "trifling with the cruet," with little appetite for solid work, and even Mr. Jones, who knows more than most of us how to run with the hare while hunting with the hounds, has grown timorous and disheartened. Well may these and other gentlemen of the trade exclaim, "A curse on quidnuncs; to the devil with criticism!" Between them and their public stand the vociferous newspaper man, crying aloud to them as the Prince and Poins cried to Francis, and scarcely heeding the "Anon! anon, sir!"

Of course the clouds will pass, and the Drama, like the

despised Phœnix, will arise from its own ashes,—or, in view of existing phenomena, shall we say "hashes"? In the meantime, one lesson will have been learned,—that Art is not to be *forced* into any given channel by the artifices of coterie-journalism. When the public interest in human problems is spontaneous, and not a mere affair of temporary fashion, we shall have problem-plays again, of one kind or another; but so long as the public taste lies in the direction of high jinks and pothouse patriotism the Bank-Holiday entertainment will continue to flourish, and the appeal of the theatre will be to the unintelligence of grown-up children. Why not, the reader may inquire? With all my heart I echo, "Why not?" Let us have high jinks by all means; but by all means let us have rational entertainment too. There would be no reasonable cause for complaint, even in the present state of things, if the Drama were suffered to evolve itself in its own way, instead of being at the mercy of the nostrum-monger, the amateur critic, and the daily newspaper.

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MR. GEORGE GIDDENS.

Portraits.

MR. GEORGE GIDDENS.

THE credit of "discovering" Mr. George Giddens belongs to Mr. Charles Wyndham, who, seeing him act in some amateur performances in the sixties, strongly advised him to become an actor. The solicitor's office was accordingly abandoned, and Mr. Giddens made his first appearance at the Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, under the management of Mr. Robert Wyndham. Six years later he accompanied Mr. Charles Wyndham to America to play Sam Gerridge and other comedy parts. Here he remained for four years, winning a reputation which has been greatly strengthened by many subsequent visits to the States. After a special one year's engagement in Australia he returned to England, and made his first bow to a London audience as Jeux in *The Idol*. The play was not successful, nor did Mr. Giddens create any great impression upon the public. But Mr. Wyndham knew his worth, for he was immediately enlisted among the prominent members of the Criterion company, in which he remained until 1890—thirteen years. This period was marked by a short, and, financially speaking, unfortunate break, during which he was part manager of the Novelty Theatre. Of his more conspicuous successes at the Criterion Theatre may be mentioned Dolly in *London Assurance*, Caleb Deecie in *The Two Roses*, Squire Chivy in *David Garrick*, Tony Lumpkin, and Careless. Just before leaving the Criterion he appeared at the Strand as Dr. Glynn in *The Balloon*, in which character he was photographed for *The Theatre*. In *Husband and Wife* at the Comedy, he created the part of Adolphus Greenthorne, and later appeared at the Court with Mrs. John Wood in *Pamela* and *Aunt Jack*. Then came another visit to America, where among other plays he was seen in Mr. Malcolm Watson's *Joseph*, upon which Londoners have not yet had an opportunity of passing judgment. In *The Passport* Mr. Giddens was almost the principal cause of the popularity which it attained, and *The Derby Winner* and *Cheer, Boys, Cheer*, both had the advantage of his unusual comedy powers. He devotes his leisure time to painting, and has not shrunk from exhibiting his prowess in this way. It may be mentioned that one of his earliest admirers was Mr. Herman Merivale, who, as far back as 1878, described him at a club as one of the finest comedians then on the stage, and as one, too, who could not fail to "go far." And far Mr. Giddens has certainly gone.

At the Play.

IN LONDON.

The arrival of September has brought about a general resumption of activity at the theatres, a large number of which have reopened during the past month. So favourable apparently is the outlook, that within a few weeks from now there will not remain a single available house in the market.

CYMBELINE.

Revival of Shakspere's Comedy at the Lyceum Theatre, September 22.

BRITONS.	
Cymbeline	Mr. MACKLIN
Cloten	Mr. NORMAN FORBES
Posthumus Leonatus	Mr. FRANK COOPER
Belarius	Mr. FREDERIC ROBINSON
Guiderius	Mr. B. WEBSTER
Arviragus	Mr. GORDON CRAIG
Pisanio	Mr. TYARS
Cornelius	Mr. LACY
Two British Captains	Mr. ARCHER, Mr. NEEDHAM
Two British Lords	Mr. CLARENCE HAGUE, Mr. BELMORE
Queen	Miss GENEVIEVE WARD
Helen	Mrs. TYARS
Imogen	Miss ELLEN TERRY
ROMANS.	
Iachimo	Sir HENRY IRVING
Philario	Mr. FULLER MELLISH
Caius Lucius	Mr. H. COOPER CLIFFE
A Roman Captain	Mr. TABB

Among the many debts of gratitude which the younger generation of playgoers owes to Sir Henry Irving, his revival of *Cymbeline* must count as one certainly of no ordinary importance. So rarely during the past twenty years has the public been afforded an opportunity of witnessing the piece that, even were curiosity the dominant or sole feeling, the gratification of that sentiment would alone furnish sufficient grounds for hearty acknowledgment. Needless to say, however, Sir Henry has far higher claims to our thanks. None of Shakspere's works has, it is true, provoked a greater diversity of opinion. While on one side it has been condemned in the most unqualified terms, on the other it has been upheld by equally competent authorities as the most delightful of the historical plays. This is neither the time nor the place to attempt to decide where, amid such divergent views, the truth lies. It is enough that, high above all lesse r

considerations of probability, consistency, or motive of story, there floats the unsurpassed and unsurpassable creation of the poet's lively brain, the Imogen, most tender and artless of all his heroines. And when it is said that Miss Ellen Terry plays the part with a radiance and a charm all her own, with a pathos and a grace of which she, among modern actresses, seems to possess the unique secret, it will be understood how in the circumstance lurks a powerful and all-sufficient reason for the revival of *Cymbeline* at the Lyceum.

Nothing would be more interesting, were it possible here, than to follow Miss Terry step by step through her exquisite performance. But, in default of that, we must be content to endeavour to indicate its most salient features. The earlier scenes were, it has to be admitted, taken hesitatingly. In face of so trying an ordeal this, however, may easily be accounted for, and excused on the score of natural nervousness. But the moment that the action of the play offered the chance, Miss Terry at once rose to the height of the occasion. It is long since we have seen such girlish *abandon*, such womanly tenderness, as that elicited by the reading of the letter from Posthumus announcing his arrival at Milford Haven. Time seemed suddenly to be effaced, the years to roll back, and before us stood Miss Terry as young, as fragrant, and as bewitching as ever she was in the seventies. Curious, is it not, that this gift of eternal youth appears to be conferred upon the greatest artists? Take her, again, in the scenes before the cave. What could be more fascinating, more graceful, than this dainty figure clad in boy's apparel? Note, too, the timid handling of the unaccustomed sword, the fearful glance into the depths of the unknown cave, the exquisite comedy of the entire performance at this point. Then comes the swift change from girlishness to womanliness, from banter to gravity, from joy to tragic horror. With the discovery of the dead body of the supposed Posthumus, everything is altered. Nor is it easy to give anything approaching an adequate impression of the frenzied agony of the situation as Imogen, on her knees, with nervous hands outstretched to heaven, denounces the "damn'd Pisanio." Rarely has Miss Terry risen to so high a level of passionate despair. Yet, withal, it is the sweet constancy, the wifely devotion, the tender trust that will probably linger longest in the recollection of the spectator as the most abiding memory of this most beautiful portrait.

With a self-denial characteristic of the true artist, Sir Henry Irving has chosen the part of Iachimo for himself. Of the part he gives a somewhat novel rendering, which seems to be based

upon Iachimo's sudden conversion in the last act. It may be taken as in the nature of a compliment if we suggest that he attempts to read into the character more than it actually contains. His conception is to a large extent intellectual. The portrait is of a man whose villainy is the outcome less of a tempestuous nature than of deliberate intention. Sir Henry, as is his wont, inclines towards what is subtle and analytical rather than to the obvious. Yet in a measure the play suffers in point of plausibility by the very thoughtfulness and the earnestness of an actor whose work has always been identified with these qualities. His performance is one of peculiar power and imaginativeness—full of masterly touches, and at times almost demoniacal in its intensity. Nor would it be easy to conceive a more striking or pathetic spectacle than that of the humbled and contrite Iachimo, a strange but sad expression of nobility upon his face, as in the tent scene he stands abased before his victors, in presence of the injured Posthumus and Imogen. It is impossible to pass away from the figure without paying tribute to the immense talent and forcible ability of the artist who conceived it.

Of the remaining characters we can only speak briefly. Mr. Frank Cooper's Posthumus is a powerful and passionate study, only lacking that touch of imagination required to elevate it into the first rank. Mr. Macklin plays Cymbeline with commendable force, and Mr. Norman Forbes is the Cloten. Belarius is safe in the hands of Mr. Frederic Robinson, a sound actor of the old school, while his two supposed sons are represented with real charm and vigour by Mr. B. Webster and Mr. Gordon Craig. Mr. Tyars makes a rugged and altogether admirable Pisanio, and Miss Genevieve Ward, Mr. Fuller Mellish, and Mr. H. Cooper Cliffe are all excellent in their respective parts. To the mounting of the piece the greatest praise can be given. The stage pictures are from first to last remarkable for the richness of their colouring and the harmony of their design, while Mr. Alma Tadema vouches for their accuracy. The battle scenes are particularly impressive, the final tableau in the second scene of the last act being of a rare and singularly majestic beauty. Once more Sir Henry has established his claim not only to the title of a great actor, but also to that of an unequalled *metteur-en-scène*. Of necessity extensive cuts have had to be made in the text, but this has been judiciously effected, and not even the most devoted student of Shakspere can adduce any real grounds for complaint in this respect. Of the triumphantly favourable reception accorded to the production there is no need to speak. But even the extraordinary enthusiasm evoked by it was hardly greater

than that which greeted Sir Henry's welcome announcement that *Cymbeline* would be followed by a revival of *Richard III.*

The Duchess of Coolgardie.

A Drama, in Five Acts, by Euston Leigh and Cyril Clare. Produced at Drury Lane Theatre, September 19.

Syb'l Grey	Miss Hilda Spong	Yorkshire Dick ..	Mr. C. M. Lowne
Wallaroo	Miss Laura Johnson	The Captain.. ..	Mr. E. H. Vanderfeldt
Kathleen O'Mara ..	Miss Laura Linden	Tom Airy	Mr. Oswald Yorke
Harry	Miss Valli-Valli	Hiram Vannicker ..	Mr. Claud Llewellyn
Nellie Grey	Miss Edith Jordan	Melbourne Jerry	Mr. Walter Brunton, Jun.
Big Ben	Mr. Charles Glenney	Herr Von Schwop ..	Mr. J. Story Gofton
Myles Hooligan ..	Mr. John L. Shine	Lord Glendargle ..	Mr. Ernest Bertram
Sailor Jack	Mr. Laurence Cautley	Macdonald	Mr. Isaacson
Bendigo Bill	Mr. Edward O'Neill	Warden of Coolgardie ..	Mr. Hermann Vezin

Mr. John Coleman has inaugurated his management of Drury Lane by the production of a good, stirring five-act melodrama constructed upon old-fashioned lines. *The Duchess of Coolgardie* is not a play to criticise—it is a play either to take or to leave alone. And those who elect for the former course will certainly have no reason to complain that they have been baulked of their money's worth. The piece is crowded with episode, each act having its own particular sensation, while if the events do not follow each other in absolutely strict sequence, they present, at any rate, a diversity of incident which can hardly fail to please the omnivorous appetite of a popular audience. The authors, Mr. Euston Leigh and Mr. Cyril Clare, have selected Coolgardie and its environs for the action of their story, and not unnaturally gold mines and the thirst for gold play important parts in their plot, of which the leading points may be briefly indicated. At an earlier period in the proceedings, Big Ben, a stalwart miner, had, it seems, fallen in love with Sybil Grey, but for some reason had married another woman, who, in due course, inoculated him with her own passion for drink. Fortunately, her death frees him just as Sybil appears once more upon the scene, accompanied by the child of her sister, Nellie, who has been betrayed by a villain vaguely named the Captain, and whose shame Sybil, for some unintelligible reason, has taken upon herself. Hero-like, Big Ben at once changes his tactics, although, even had she been guilty, Sybil would have been far too good for so drunken a sot as he. Reformation, however, sets in. By the discovery of a fabulously rich mine Ben becomes wealthy, in spite of the efforts of the Captain, who tries to dispossess him of his prize. In this he succeeds at last, Ben having foolishly entrusted £20,000 in bank notes to the care of Nellie, whom the Captain murders in order to secure the swag. Suspicion, of course, falls upon an innocent miner—Ben's brother—whom Ben himself, however, finally clears in one of the most amusingly burlesque portrayals of a law court ever witnessed. By this time he has learned that Sybil is a lady

of unspotted virtue, although obviously holding exaggerated views regarding sisterly devotion, and with the death of the villain all ends happily.

In its rough and ready fashion the piece is not ineffective, despite its many inconsistencies. Into the performance the actors enter with commendable spirit. In Miss Hilda Spong, who, as the heroine, makes her first appearance on the London stage, we have undoubtedly an artist of great power and charm. Miss Spong knows her business thoroughly; she is handsome, and gifted with a beautiful voice, which she uses to the best advantage. A more promising *début* has not, in short, been witnessed for a long time, and we shall certainly watch Miss Spong's progress with lively interest. Mr. Charles Glenney played the hero with unfailing spirit and energy, Mr. J. L. Shine created continual laughter by his picture of a good-natured, quick-witted Irishman, and Mr. E. H. Vanderfeldt made an uncompromising villain. Excellent character sketches were also contributed by Miss Laura Linden, Mr. Laurence Cautley, Mr. C. M. Lowne, Mr. Walter Brunton, jun., and Mr. Hermann Vezin, while as Nellie Grey Miss Edith Jordan showed a considerable amount of emotional power.

Boys Together.

An Original Drama, in Four Acts, by Haddon Chambers and Comyns Carr. Produced at the Adelphi Theatre, August 26.

Frank Villars	Mr. William Terriss	The Hon. Fred. Cholmondeley	Mr. J. Lindsay
Hugo Forsyth	Mr. W. L. Abingdon	Captain Lister	Mr. E. Covington
The Earl of Harpenden	Mr. C. W. Somerset	Herbert Askew	Mr. Alban Attwood
Tom Wrake	Mr. J. D. Beveridge	Reginald Lane	Mr. J. W. Macdonald
Viscount Ayot	Mr. Harry Nicholls	Ethel Wood	Miss Millward
Rudolph Klein	Mr. Mackintosh	Lady Ayot..	Miss Alice Kingsley
Hassan	Mr. Luigi Lablache	Mrs. Babbage	Miss Kate Kearney
Colonel Lannock.. ..	Mr. Oscar Adye	Mariam	Miss Nesbitt

Although it will hardly be contended that either of the joint authors of *Boys Together* has, in the dramatic field, won for himself a reputation of the first order, both have in their time accomplished sufficiently promising work to arouse lively interest in anything bearing their signatures. What, therefore, must be the feelings of any true lover of the theatre to find these two gentlemen collaborating in the production of so verbose, ill-balanced, and unconvincing a play as *Boys Together?* It is, of course, competent for Mr. Chambers and Mr. Carr to retort that their sole aim and duty was to write a piece which should satisfy the requirements of an Adelphi audience and fulfil the traditions of that theatre. But even if we take no higher ground than that, we should have little difficulty in showing how far inferior in point of constructive ability and sensational effect their work is to the work of, for instance, the late Henry Pettitt. Mr. Chambers

we can excuse, for reasons easily specified, for undertaking such a task. Through most of his plays runs a current of melodrama which only required to be diverted into its natural channel in order to yield results of a more or less satisfactory nature. With Mr. Carr the case is different. His views concerning all questions bearing upon art have invariably carried weight; he has gathered literature and the drama under his protecting wing, whence they are permitted to peep out from time to time on the occasion of some after-dinner speech. When he became manager of the Comedy the shout went up, "At last we are to have a theatre run upon purely artistic principles!" and if reality fell short of expectation the result may in some measure be attributed to the force of adverse circumstances. But, attempt as we may to explain and condone past shortcomings, there is no overlooking the self-evident and heart-breaking fact that considerations of art have at length yielded to others of a more material description, and to-day Mr. Carr's name figures on the Adelphi programme as part-author of *Boys Together*.

These remarks must stand as a general criticism of a piece far too long and intricate to admit of minute analysis here. The story deals with the fortunes of two men, Frank Villars and Hugo Forsyth, the latter's bitter hatred of the former being accounted for on the strangely insufficient grounds that Villars had at school administered to him a sound and well-deserved thrashing. Forsyth, having for excellent reasons abandoned his own name of Wood, had married in early youth a girl called Ethel, whose eyes were speedily opened to the real character of her husband. Believing, however, that he had perished at sea, Ethel considered herself free to accept the attentions of Villars, who, at the opening of the play, is on the point of sailing with his regiment for Egypt. At this juncture Forsyth unexpectedly turns up, and expresses his desire to accompany the expedition as special correspondent, while Ethel is restrained by his threats from revealing the truth to her lover. The next act, undoubtedly the best of the four, passes in the Soudan, at the time of General Gordon's imprisonment and death in Khartoum. Forsyth and Villars have been made prisoners by Hassan, one of the Mahdi's adherents. With them are Viscount Ayot, a low comedy lordling, and Rudolph Klein, an accomplice of Forsyth's. By an exceedingly obvious trick, conceived by Klein, the hero is proved guilty of theft, condemned to be flogged, and afterwards, like Constantine in *For the Crown*, manacled to a rock and there left to die a lingering death. His appeal for help to Forsyth is answered by a cowardly sneer. But assistance reaches him from Mariam, a native woman to whom Villars has shown some kindness. Free

once more, Villars registers a mighty oath that he will not rest until he has been revenged upon his dastardly betrayer.

From this point onward the interest of the drama steadily declines. The end is, indeed, a foregone conclusion, for it is clear that hero and heroine cannot be made happy save by the death of the rascally Forsyth. This is effected, not by the avenging Villars, but by the conventional device of precipitating him over a cliff into a yawning chasm at the bottom of which he is dashed to pieces. *Boys Together* is overladened with superabundant verbiage and with meaningless incident, while the comedy element, although starting from a fairly good idea, quickly dwindles into insignificance. Revenge is the keynote of the entire drama, in which love plays but a subsidiary part; and in so far as this is the case the interest of the story is sensibly weakened. For the performance we can only spare a word or two. As Frank Villars, Mr. William Terriss showed tremendous energy, never sparing himself, and delivering his lengthy harangues with consummate skill. Mr. W. L. Abingdon gave a fine impersonation of the craven Forsyth, and Mr. Mackintosh a superb portrait of Klein. Indeed, the authors owe it entirely to the actor that so impossible a character was permitted to pass without censure. Mr. Harry Nicholls did all that was feasible with the thankless part of Lord Ayot, while Miss Millward revealed genuine power and sensibility as the heroine, Ethel.

Newmarket.

An Original Racing Comedy with Music, in Three Acts, by Mrs. Frank Taylor. Lyrics by Ernest Boyde Jones. Produced at the Opera Comique, August 22.

Lord Kempton ..	Mr. Wilfred Forster	Poppy Snaffle	Miss May Edouin
Colonel Stockbridge	.. Mr. Forbes Dawson	Lady Ascotte ..	.. Miss Sadie Jerome
Tom Snaffle	.. Mr. Willie Edouin	Lady Windsor ..	Miss Kate Sargeantson
Ronald Mayver ..	..Mr. Charles Stuart	Lady Sandown	..Miss J. Butler
M. Brisson	..Mr. Laurence Caird	Miss Alexandra Parkes ..	.. Miss Stafford
Ferdie Craddock ..	Mr. Kenneth Altamont	Mrs. Nap Jones ..	Miss Greene Taylor
Sir William Ascotte	Mr. Aubrey Fitzgerald	Kitty	Miss Virginia Boswell
Charlie Fenn ..	Mr. George A. Seager	Maggie	.. Miss Rose Hamilton
Jemmy Smart ..	Mr. Littledale Power	Mrs. Charles Fenn ..	Miss Winnie Carl

Mrs. Frank Taylor covers well-worn ground in her new racing comedy, *Newmarket*. The treacherous jockey who, in a spirit of revenge, purposely loses a race in order to ruin his employer, is as well known as that other one gifted with all the virtues, and prepared at any moment to jump upon the favourite and pilot him victoriously to the winning post. *Newmarket* is, in brief, a play of the most conventional class, interspersed with music. In the circumstances it would serve no useful purpose to describe in detail how Lord Kempton, after losing a princely fortune through the rascality of his head jockey, finds himself recouped by the efforts of pretty Poppy Snaffle, the courageous daughter of his loyal old trainer. The same incidents have been used again and

again as the basis of numerous sporting dramas since the days of *Flying Scud*, and although Mrs. Taylor has imported into her piece certain elements of novelty, the main thread of the story possesses no claim to originality. Yet, unsparingly pruned of its excessive *longueurs*, the comedy is sufficiently bright and amusing to render success not unlikely. The burden of the acting falls chiefly upon Mr. Willie Edouin and his daughter, Miss May. The former gives an extremely clever and effective portrait of the tetchy old trainer, Snaffle—an impersonation, indeed, that deserves a place among the best of Mr. Edouin's performances. Miss May Edouin is a very bright little comedian, with, however, a tendency, which ought to be instantly checked, to over-act. Her voice is by no means strong, but her singing is expressive and pleasing, while as a dancer she is sprightly and nimble. The remaining members of the company hardly call for individual mention.

Monte Carlo.

A Musical Comedy, in Two Acts. Words by Sidney Carlton. Lyrics by Harry Greenbank. Music by Howard Talbot. Produced at the Avenue Theatre, August 27.

Sir Benjamin Currie, Q.C., M.P.	Mr. C. Rock	Francois	Mr. Edward Espinosa
General Boomerang, V.C. ..	Mr. Eric Lewis	Mrs. Carthew	Miss Lottie Venne
Fred Dorian	Mr. Richard Green	Dorothy	Miss Kate Cutler
James	..Mr. E. W. Garden	Ethel	..Miss Hettis Lund
Harry Verinder ..	Mr. A. Vane Tempest	Gertie Gelatine ..	.. Miss May Belfry
Professor Lorrimer ..	Mr. Robb Harwood	Bertie Gelatine ..	Miss Venie Belfry
Belmont..	Mr. Guy Fane	Little Jemima	.. Miss Lalor Shiel
Standring	Mr. C. Wilford	A Midshipman.. ..	Miss Kitty Abrahaml
Captain Rossiter ..	Mr. W. H. Kemble	Suzanne	.. Miss Emmie Owen

Monte Carlo is as innocent of plot as any musical comedy well can be, yet it contains so much that is bright, amusing, and attractive that the omission may readily be pardoned. That there is absolutely nothing of an offensive nature to be found in it is, moreover, a circumstance which calls for grateful recognition. These merits would of themselves suffice to secure a welcome for the piece. But it possesses even more decisive titles to praise in the exceedingly ingenious and humorous lyrics by Mr. Henry Greenbank and the graceful melodies of Mr. Howard Talbot, who, by his latest work, has certainly earned the right to rank among the most promising of our young composers. If the author, Mr. Sidney Carlton, must be assigned a position below that occupied by his collaborators, he may be credited, at any rate, with furnishing a libretto sufficient for the necessities of the occasion. His wit belongs rather to the nursery order, but with care and judicious fostering it may yet attain to man's estate. Meanwhile he will do well to eschew punning and fix his attention upon the higher forms of humour. What story there is in *Monte Carlo* circles round the doings of a certain Mrs. Carthew, who, intent upon securing an eligible spouse, suddenly finds

herself confronted by the husband she believed to be dead, and who is now a waiter at Monte Carlo. The love adventures of a young couple, doomed to quarrel and subsequently to be reconciled, also figure for something in the plot. A good deal of amusement is, in addition, caused by the flirtations of the Sisters Gelatine (a couple of music-hall singers, effectively boomed by their father, Professor Lorrimer) with two elderly admirers, Sir Benjamin Currie, Q.C., and General Boomerang. As usual, no attempt is made to continue the plot in the second act, which is practically composed of a series of variety turns. Nevertheless, the general impression left by the entire performance is pleasant and exhilarating. The company, meanwhile, is an admirable one. Mr. Charles Rock, Mr. Eric Lewis, Mr. E. W. Garden, and Mr. Robb Harwood are, each in his own peculiar way, excellent, while Mr. Richard Green proves himself to be an accomplished vocalist. Miss Lottie Venne's abilities are rather wasted upon such a part as that of Mrs. Carthew, and Miss Kate Cutler and Miss Emmie Owen act and sing charmingly. The hit of the evening was, however, made by Miss Lalor Shiel, an exceedingly quaint and humorous actress, who, as Jemima, an east-end music-hall artist, provoked roars of laughter.

Lord Tom Noddy.

A Musical Piece, in Two Acts. Written by George Dance. Composed by F. Osmond Carr. Produced at the Garrick Theatre, September 15.

Lord Tom Noddy	Little Tich	Maud	Miss Dora Nelson
Magnum	Mr. Cecil Frere	Ethel	Miss Maud Trautner
Colonel Ben Nevis	Mr. Picton Roxborough	Florrie	Miss Maidie Hope
Miss Ben Nevis	Miss Gladys Ffolliott	Beatrice	Miss Olive Dalmour
Soloman Van Delle	Mr. H. C. Barry	Marguerite	Mlle. Germaine de Marco
Lieutenant Crawshaw, R.N.	Mr. G. Paulton	May	Miss Edna Grace
Miss Polly Primrose	Miss Kate James	Gladys	Miss Edith Singlehurst
Marion Forsyth	Miss Sybil Arundale	Augustus A. Jackson	Mr. Sidney Harcourt
Constance Forsyth	Miss Katie Leechman	Nurse Phœbe	Miss Mabel Love
Angela	Miss Violet Friend		

"The old order changeth." And, alas, what a change! From John Hare to Little Tich, from Pinero and Grundy to George Dance. And yet the *Daily Telegraph* sheds no tears of blood—it is even disposed to receive this last departure with philosophical equanimity. For ourselves, we cannot pretend to regard it with equal indifference. We confess to a feeling best left undescribed at seeing a theatre which, short as its existence has been, is already crowded with traditions of an honourable past, handed over to the tender mercies of the concocters of musical comedy. Let us hasten to add that for this result we in no way blame the present management of the Garrick. Our quarrel is with the public which turns its back upon a consummate comedian, a matchless company, and thoughtful plays written by the cleveres t and wittiest of English dramatists, in order to welcome with open

arms the frolics and the inanities of the music-hall. *De gustibus non est disputandum*, however; and we can only hope that before long the present vogue will have exhausted itself, to be succeeded by a taste for more solid and enduring entertainment.

Upon pieces like *Lord Tom Noddy* criticism is wasted. But it has to be said that in his latest effusion the author, Mr. George Dance, has succeeded — and the feat is no small one—in falling below the humble level attained by him in previous plays of a similar character. A libretto more destitute of humour, a story less sequent and trite, it would be difficult to imagine. Mr. Dance has apparently been satisfied with the artless idea of presenting one set of abnormally tall characters and another of proportionately small characters, and of bringing them together in juxtaposition. The fun arising from such a situation is unfortunately soon exhausted, and the constant repetition of the same experiment merely ends by fatiguing the spectator. When the play opens, Lord Tom Noddy, having squandered all his fortune, is discovered on the brink of ruin, and accordingly proceeds to pay court to Miss Ben Nevis, a massive lady whom he believes to be an heiress. His real sweethheart, however, is Nurse Phœbe, who presently inherits £100,000, which she endeavours to transfer to her little admirer. On no very apparent grounds, one or other of the characters is subsequently credited with the acquisition of the fortune, the crowd of suitors transferring their attentions with mechanical precision to the last indicated. In the end true love is rewarded, and Nurse Phœbe becomes Lady Tom Noddy. The piece, of course, depends for success on the efforts of Little Tich, who bears the burden placed upon him with marvellous ease. As an eccentric dancer this quaint little comedian takes rank with the best, and if his method as an actor still vividly recalls the manners of the music-hall, no one can deny that it is hugely amusing. As Nurse Phœbe, Miss Mabel Love gave a very charming performance, and proved that practice has gone far to bring about perfection in her dancing. Of the other characters, as of Dr. Carr's music, it will suffice to say that each served all needful purposes fairly well.

My Artful Valet.

A Farcical Comedy, in Three Acts. Adapted by James Mortimer from *Le Truc d'Arthur* by MM. Chivot and Duru. Revived at Terry's Theatre, August 22.

Mr. Leopold Fitz-Jocelyn	Mr. J. G. Grahame	Spinks	Mr. James Welch
Mr. Timothy Chadwick	Mr. Alfred Maltby	Richards	Mr. Frank Baker
Count Evitoff	Mr. Ivan Watson	Mrs. Gloriana Lovering	Miss Edith Blande
Baron Kronikoff	Mr. Rupert Lister	Jessie Chadwick	Miss Maggie Byron
Major Stonideff	Mr. John Byron	Kitty	Miss Lydia Cowell

Terry's Theatre has passed temporarily into the hands of Mr. James Welch, who began his season there with a revival of Mr. James Mortimer's farce *Gloriana*, now renamed *My Artful*

Valet, and of Mr. Louis N. Parker's clever one-act play *The Man in the Street*. Under its new title, Mr. Mortimer's piece proves to be as mirthful and laughable as it was in the days when Mr. Murray Carson controlled the destinies of the Globe. Mr. Welch, who, in the Globe performance, played a microscopic part, now assumes that of Spinks, the artful valet, who in his hands becomes a creature of great drollery and effect: while the remainder of the cast, if hardly, perhaps, quite equal to the original one, is at least fairly adequate.

IN PARIS.

The Comédie Française has revived *Charles VII. chez ses Grands Vassaux*. The piece, though it has been played several times before, has never been a great success. It was first produced in 1831, and a few years afterwards Beauvallet made the part of Yacoub his own. *Charles VII.* is written somewhat in the style of Corneille, but owing to the divided interest of the story it is diffuse and unequal, and the attention of the audience is very difficult to retain. In these circumstances it is not likely, in spite of M. Paul Mounet's brilliant impersonation of Yacoub, and of the able assistance of MM. Silvain and Bouchor, to have more attractiveness than has hitherto attended it.

Jacques Callot, a spectacular drama in five acts by MM. Henri Cain, Eugène and Edoard Adenis, with incidental music by M. Le Rey, was produced at the Porte St. Martin by M. Coquelin, who discards one or two parts that he might have played with advantage, and interprets an uncompromising villain who is unfortunately but seldom on the stage. It is a sort of melodrama, but is somewhat loosely constructed, if indeed it can be said to be constructed at all. The sequence of events is mainly designed to display the managerial resources. A bear takes up at least as large a part of the action as M. Coquelin himself, and the whole winds up with a grand battle-scene, in which the presence of Bark and the absence of Bite is only too lamentably apparent. It might be an adaptation of a "blood and thunder" story published for the edification of boys. M. Coquelin is ably supported by his son, M. Jean Coquelin, MM. Gauthier and Segond, and Mlle. Dauphin. There are over thirty speaking parts in the play, which, it is to be sincerely hoped, will quickly be replaced by some work more adapted to the display of M. Coquelin's genius.

IN BERLIN.

In the Friedrichwilhelmstädtischen theatre a successful attempt has been made to produce Grabbe's historical drama, *Barbarossa*.

For sixty years Grabbe has been put down in all the text books on German literature as a perverted genius. In the opinion of first-rate critics, however, he has been regarded as a rival of Schiller, and it has been considered by some that, if he had only possessed ballast, he would have taken a higher place among German poets than the author of *Wilhelm Tell*. Grabbe was no Philistine, as were the insignificant writers who ran after Schiller and sought to imitate him in his day. The play of *Barbarossa*, which is in five long acts, is deficient in its technique, in its language, and in its fidelity to nature; but, in spite of grave faults, it is vastly superior to a number of plays which are put on the stage to-day, and the attempt to present it deserves praise.

Herr Wilhelm Henzen's *Das neue Genie* opens the season at the Lessing theatre. The story is that of a gifted young musician who is discovered by a music publisher. The latter thinks he has found a new Mascagni in Caesar Stephani, and under the pretence of being a Maecenas, desires to make as much profit out of his genius as he can. He advertises the young man well, and seduces him from the retirement of his village to Berlin. Here Stephani makes the acquaintance of an engaging lady, an opera-singer of distinction, who takes a great fancy to certain parts of his coming opera. She proves to be his bad angel, and he falls into a nervous fever in consequence of her attentions. However, when we see the hero, at the beginning of the last act, cured of his fever, we are pretty confident that the piece will go on satisfactorily. When we see Stephani in his green silk convalescent jacket, we know that we may trust him to commit some fresh absurdity. But there is a brave old professor of music in the background, who wears a magnificent order on his breast, and he watches over the new genius. He first drives the lady away, then turns his attention to the publisher, and finally takes Stephani back to his village, where he restores him to a friend who has been waiting for three years for Stephani's return. The friend's daughter is Caesar's affianced bride. Why he did not marry her in the first act remains to her and to us a mystery. There is a little too much moralising in the piece, which, although clever, was not quite a success. The author was called before the curtain at the end of each act several times; but a slight hissing mingled with the applause at the conclusion of the play.

At the Theater unter den Linden, the season has opened with *Lachtaube* an operetta in three acts, the words by Herren Landesberg, and Stein, the music by Herr Von Taund. Lachtaube is the name given to the wife of the Schankwirt, Wasylko Okinski, who has a profitable inn in a Woywodschaft of Poland. Wasylko's wife, Tatjana, is of a merry disposition, and this is the

reason of her being called Lachtaube. Tatjana is virtuous, and nothing would disturb her happy marriage with Wasylko if the nobility of the neighbourhood, and especially the Woywode, did not go out of their way to mix themselves up with the charming young wife. In order to achieve his base designs, the Woywode has the meanness to have Wasylko arrested on a false charge and thrown by night into prison. During the husband's enforced absence he approaches Tatjana, but in doing so has the misfortune to fall into the water. While saving him, Tatjana sees through his plan, and hastens to summon some of the neighbours in order that she may be able to convince them of the evil designs of her admirer. In the meantime the Woywode has entered the house and got into bed in order to warm himself after his unexpected bath, for he is nearly freezing. Wasylko, liberated, finds the Woywode's overcoat on the bench in front of his house, and is convinced of his wife's infidelity. He wishes to revenge himself upon her, and dons the coat to disguise himself. This is rather easy, as there is a marked resemblance between him and the Woywode. He has hardly done so when his wife returns with the neighbours. There is nothing left for the frightened Woywode but to put on the clothes of Wasylko. From this point the piece runs on the well-worn lines of mistaken identity and its results. The authors have not been able to make anything new out of the device, and the introduction is the only original feature of the piece.

IN VIENNA.

At the Theater an der Wien the first piece of any interest this season has been Signor Mascagni's *Zanetto*. The book of the piece has been strung together from M. Coppée's comedy, *Le Passant*, which deals with the same kind of subject as Goethe's ballad, "Der Gott und die Bajadere," though certainly in the most modern way. "Mahadöh, the Lord of Earth," is here called Zanetto, and the part is that in which, in her time, Madame Bernhardt had so much success, and which now affords to Bellincioni, the Sarah Bernhardt of opera, a long-desired opportunity of demonstrating her art as a singer and player to the best advantage. Zanetto, a youth, has gone to sleep in the garden of a much-courted beauty, named Sylvia. When he opens his eyes again, awakened by Sylvia's hand, he realises for the first time the charm of womanly beauty. As for Sylvia, she experiences what she has never known till now, the emotion of a really deep love. However, she yields neither to the passionate entreaties of the youth nor to her own impulses; she leaves him.

The artistic form of Signor Mascagni's operetta is its most interesting feature; both the piece and its stage accessories are of the simplest character, and some dissatisfaction has been expressed at the impossibility of making anything out of the work from the point of view of spectacular effect. The music is in the maestro's well-known style, but it has far too little originality to justify any outlay either of trouble or of expense. In fact, Signor Mascagni's muse strikes one as having become *blasé*. The music is in slow time throughout, and in only a few places does it rise to anything like distinction. In some respects, the introductory music is also lacking in merit; it is a chorus sung behind the scenes, which has already brought the composer into the bad graces of learned contrapuntists in his own country. It cannot be said that the criticisms passed upon him for this chorus are undeserved; it is simply inartistic. From the dramatic point of view the piece calls for no analysis. In spite of its many and great deficiencies, *Zanetto* met with a good reception on the first night.

IN ITALIAN CITIES.

Though not very fruitful in new things, the past month has been one of considerable activity in Italian theatres. At Rome, for instance, the frequent changes of programme have been almost kaleidoscopic. Among the items which have been seen on the bills of the Quirino in the course of September are *Albergo del Libero Scambio*, *Lo Zio Bidachon*, *Odette*, and *Il Matrimonio d'Ivette*, while those of the Nazionale have included *Piantagione Thomassin* and *Maria Antonietta*, and those of the Costanzi, *La Gran Via* and *La Lanterna di mia Moglie*. The autumn season was opened at Lecce with a very successful performance of *Mignon*, and Signora Maria Solera, Signora Barone, and Signori Longoni and Oreste Poli well merited the applause with which their rendering of the chief parts was received. At Florence, the Pasta-Tina Company played *Il Destino*, a comedy by Signor Sabatino Lopez, and they had the misfortune not to please their audience. Signor Gustavo Salvani gave a series of performances at the Mercadante at Naples, the chief plays in which he appeared being the *Morte Civile* and *Otello*. A performance given for the benefit of Signor Edoardo Ferravilla, at the Alfieri at Turin, drew together a large number of the friends and admirers of this well-known Italian comedian. Signor Ferravilla played, in the course of the evening, Pedrin, Tecoppa, Panada, and Gigione, the four characters in which he is best known. *I Funzionari* an old

comedy in three acts, by Nicolaevitch Ostrovsky, the Russian author, was performed recently for the first time in Italy at the Manzoni, Milan. Early in the play certain members of the audience signified strong disapproval of the sentiments expressed, and also of the acting, and matters did not improve with the subsequent acts. It is probable, therefore, that, so far at least as Italy is concerned, the play must return to that oblivion from which it has been exhumed after a burial of about forty years. At Fermio a new two-act opera, by Signor Emidio Cellini, entitled *Vendetta Sarda*, was very well received, and it bears promise of successful repetitions in the future.

IN MADRID.

The Spanish theatres have scarcely yet roused themselves from the lethargy induced by a southern summer. The Eslava has, however, opened its new season, but has done so with a quadruple programme, which has given rise to some amount of adverse comment among the critics. The works comprised therein are *De Vuelta del Vivero*, *Compañero y Sacristan*, *La Czarina*, and *Via Libre*, and the objection has been raised that, with at least the first two of them, the Madrid public have become so familiar through recent long runs of these plays in the hands of companies of the first rank that it is injudicious, to put it mildly, to attempt to reproduce them after but a short interval with an entirely new company. In spite of these criticisms, however, the Eslava opened very satisfactorily, and the well-filled house appeared quite content with the programme provided. Among the members of the company who signally distinguished themselves were Señoritas Romero, Medina, and Miralles, and Señores Carreras, Gonzalez, and Talavera. On the occasion of a charitable performance given at the Zarzuela, Señor Leopoldo Cano's drama, *La Pasionaria*, was played with success, and Señor Antonio Vico interpreted the part of Marcial in a most creditable manner. At the Moderno *Los Granaderos*, a new operetta by Señor Valente, was sung for the first time, and with appreciable success. The story abounds in humorous situations, while the music enjoys the distinction of some originality.

IN NEW YORK.

The last four weeks have shown all the activity in theatrical matters that betokens the beginning of another season. The reign of the roof-gardens came to an end on August 20th, when,

at the Academy of Music, a melodrama by Mr. Clay Green and Mr. David Belasco, called *Under the Polar Star*, was successfully produced. It is a melodrama of the usual pattern, well told, and effectively acted by a company including Mr. W. H. Thompson, Mr. Francis Carlyle, Mr. Culyer Hastings, and Miss Grace Henderson. A week later saw an almost general reopening. At the Empire Theatre *Rosemary* was received with all the warmth that it deserved. Mr. John Drew as Sir Jasper was as felicitous in the early scenes as he was in the very poetical, albeit unnecessary, epilogue. Miss Maude Adams' charming impersonation of Dorothy will be no small cause of the favour for which the play seems destined. *The Cotton Spinner*, a melodrama by Mr. Scott Marble, has been produced at the Grand Opera House, but with very disappointing results. The same may be said of *In the Heart of the Storm* at the Columbus, although, by reason of its admirable mounting and effects, it is not improbable that the play will be materially reconstructed. Mr. Edward Harrigan, after a long silence, has, at the Bijou, at length produced another play. As a picture of New York life, *Marty Malone* may compare with any of his previous works, and the acting of the author in the name-part was in his old quietly humorous and popular style. *The Great North-West* and *When London Sleeps* have been produced at the American and Fourteenth-street Theatres respectively, and both plays seem likely to attract the large melodrama-loving public. Mr. R. N. Stevens is the author of a romantic drama called *An Enemy to the King*, which Mr. Sothern has produced at the Lyceum. It is a *Zenda*-like play, and is designed, to speak in the broadest sense, to give Mr. Sothern the same opportunities as he had in Mr. Anthony Hope's dramatised novel. Miss Virginia Harned, by her performance of a typical heroine of romance, may almost be said to have divided the honours of the evening. An adaptation from the French of M. Bisson, entitled *The Liar*, has been produced at Hoyt's, but has received only scant favour. At the Broadway, *The Caliph*, a comic opera by Mr. H. B. Smith and Herr Englander, is a medley of song, dance, and incident, planned to give Mr. Jefferson de Angelis every opportunity for the display of his vocal and comedy powers. The purpose of the authors was amply accomplished, though it may be doubted whether Mr. Angelis alone will be able to make the piece an abiding success.

Echoes from the Green Room.

In spite of the time of year, there was the usual great representative audience at the first night of *Cymbeline* at the Lyceum, many having travelled hundreds of miles to be there. After the performance, almost equally as a matter of course, Sir Henry Irving held a friendly reception on the stage. One eminent journalist spoke of Miss Terry as "Madame Atlas," naturally in reference to the predominance of Imogen in the drama. "Exquisite performance; but not a well-made play," remarked somebody in the stalls to a dramatist. "A well-made play?" was the reply; "no; Haddon Chambers at his worst."

Cymbeline is to be followed at the Lyceum by *Madame Sans-Gêne*, and then by *Richard III.*

It is expected that Madame Patti will be one of the Queen's guests at Balmoral during the visit of the Tsar.

Madame Bernhardt is fond of a practical joke. During her last visit to London, it seems, she gave out that a tax of £130 had been imposed upon her receipts, that she had refused to pay it, and that the whole company, as a consequence, would be taken to prison. Poor Mlle. Seylor, her devoted friend, could not sleep for thinking about it. One night, after the departure of the rest of the company, the great actress and Mlle. Seylor were "arrested" at the stage door by several men in uniform, who hurried them into a four-wheel cab "for Holloway Gaol." Of course, the party did not get farther than the Savoy Hotel, where a charming little supper was in readiness for the "prisoners" and a select few. The guileless Mlle. Seylor did not soon recover from her fright.

Miss Ellen Terry has purchased of Mrs. Gerberding, of San Francisco, a curtain-raiser entitled *A Champagne Cork*, which was submitted to her during her recent visit to America.

Mme. Melba will probably appear in *Siegfried* in London early next June, with M. Jean de Reszke as the hero and M. Edouard de Reszke as Wotan.

Mr. Hare, who is now on a provincial tour, leaves for his second visit to America early in November.

Mr. George Alexander has been staying at Wynyard Park as the guest of Lord Londonderry. He and his company lately gave a performance at Stockton of *The Woman-Hater* in aid of the local charities, his host's daughter, Lady Helen Stewart, playing Kitty Denison. Lady Londonderry, with several of a large house-party, was present. *As You Like It* will shortly be revived at the St. James's.

Miss Ada Rehan has been passing the vacation at her bungalow on the Irish coast.

Madame Judic is making arrangements for another American tour.

The marriage of M. Jean de Reszke with the Countess de Moilly is expected to take place in Poland early in October, just before the departure of the bridegroom for America.

Madame Nordica, who is still in England, will not, we understand, form part of the company engaged for the Metropolitan Opera House, New York, next season—doubtless to the sincere regret of its managers.

Miss Sybil Sanderson has signed an engagement to sing at the Imperial Opera House, Vienna, next season, *Esclar Monde* being one of the pieces in which she is to appear.

Madame Etelka Gerster, who in 1877 was placed by a few London critics on a level with Madame Patti and Madame Nilsson, has fallen, we regret to say, upon evil days. Nine years ago her voice failed, and since that time she has lived in somewhat straitened circumstances. Now and then she goes on a concert tour, but generally without success. For the present she has settled in Bologna, there to educate her two children.

Mr. Willard has been on a visit to Mr. Hall Caine in the Isle of Man, there to talk over the play which the former will produce in America during his coming tour.

Mr. Toole is having yet another successful provincial tour.

Mr. Wilson Barrett was not idle during his recent holiday. He has turned *The Sign of the Cross* into a novel, and has completed his new drama, *The Daughters of Babylon.*

Mr. Wyndham, refreshed by a well-deserved holiday, returns to the Criterion in October, when *Rosemary* will be revived.

Mrs. Kendal, with her husband, began a fourteen weeks tour at Blackpool on September 7th, the plays being *The Greatest of These—*, *A Scrap of Paper*, *The Queen's Shilling*, and *The Ironmaster.*

The Little Genius in its revised form is greatly improved. The story is strengthened, and the additional numbers sung by Miss Florence St. John, together with other attractions recently added, will go far to insure it a term of success that was hardly expected on the first night.

It is always agreeable to contemplate the performance of Mr. Clement Scott on the stage of dramatic criticism. Of late he has been more than usually funny, though not with the slightest intention is he so. In the *Rocket*, a new weekly paper, he hits out rather wildly at the stage of the present day, holding (with a plentiful supply of notes of exclamation) that we are all depressed by mediocrity, that the actor-manager ought to be abolished forthwith, and that—well, we must refer our readers to the articles themselves. Again, evidently as ignorant of the existence of *Olivia* and other fine plays as of the fact that female comedy writers are not a novelty, he solemnly enjoins those who are determined to dramatize a popular novel to do nothing of the kind. Probably the theatrical world has not yet reached an ideal state of perfection; but it is needless to take Mr. Scott's utterances at all seriously. What can ail him? He may now be expected to write more in the same angry strain, especially in view of the recent article by Mr. Max Beerbohm in the *Saturday Review* on "An Unhappy Poet."

Mr. Scott tells us that a "leading actress" lately described blank verse to him as "rubbish," and had as much contempt for Shakspere. "She was too ill-educated and uncultured," he adds, "to understand either."

If the actress should meet him in a dark lane, and is of a high spirit, the result of this comment might be very interesting to hear.

"No one in England," writes "Gawain," "was more affected by the death of the younger Dickens than Mr. J. L. Toole. He seemed to see in him a link that bound him to the days when, at the advice of the elder Dickens, he adopted the stage as a profession. Mr. Toole came under the influence of Dickens at the very crucial point of his career. His dozen or more emphatic eccentricities are all in the Dickens spirit, and while they have no trace of conscious eccentricity, they could only have been inspired by the novelist. As some one said recently, 'Mr. Toole may not look at life through the glasses of Dickens, but he seems to see it as one of Dickens's characters would.' Consciously or unconsciously, Mr. Toole has always embodied the Dickens spirit. Perhaps for that reason, his acting seems so deliciously rare and quaint to the present generation of theatregoers."

Mr. Edward Terry has been interviewed—not for the first time. "No," he said, "I think I have no favourite part unless it is the latest. I was, of course, fond of Dick Phenyl in *Sweet Lavender*. You cannot succeed in acting if you have favourite parts. You must treat them all fairly, like a family."

The fatal accident at the Novelty Theatre has revived abroad the old discussion as to whether the actor should allow himself to be carried away by the excitement of the moment. "I am convinced," says M. Coquelin the elder, "that to be a great actor you must be able to govern yourself absolutely. The actor ought not to be subject to emotion. The pianist need not be in an agony of grief to play Beethoven or Chopin's 'Dead March.' An actor who fully experiences the passions of his part would probably play very badly. Emotion would break his voice; he could not make himself understood." Very different is the view taken by M. Mounet-Sully, who, in one of his recent performances of Hamlet at the Théâtre Français, was so far moved in the play scene as to throw into the orchestra the fan which he had been waving before Ophelia. Of course, the question raised is one of compromise.

Apropos of the first volume of a sumptuous work by Mr. Edwin O. Sachs and Mr. Ernest Woodrow, a good deal of nonsense has been talked as to the comparative merits of English and Continental opera houses and theatres. When a Government will spend over a million sterling in subsidizing such institutions, as that of Austro-Hungary has done, it will be time enough to talk of haste in the building of playhouses in London. After all, English private theatres built not by subsidies have been and are ahead of all the rabbit-traps abroad. Take, for instance, the Lyceum, on which a fortune has been spent by its present manager.

The Rev. Canon Thompson, of Cardiff, is eloquent in praise of *The Sign of the Cross*. He points out that the treament of such a theme on the stage is absolutely right in principle, and that the theatre should be, conjointly with the Church, an instructor of the people in the highest things of life. "Mr. Barrett," he adds, "has a fine literary instinct, which has enabled him to put an intellectual and literary restraint upon his imagination. He is a thoughtful, refined, and scholarly man."

An esteemed contributor points out that we are getting too much on the stage of a particular sort of imitation. "Every time a London success is booked for touring," he writes, "the company engaged sit in front at the

original production, and make a dead copy of every tone of voice, every gesture, and every facial expression of the 'creators' of the parts. Thus every time you strike one of these companies, instead of seeing the often really clever people engaged giving an independent performance, you see a batch of mere mimicry, which becomes irksome. In days when country folk did not often come to London, and London folk did not dash into the provinces, as is the case of late years, this 'parroting' did not matter so much. Lately, however, many playgoers of different sorts are complaining of this sort of thing. It was very conspicuous in the touring company which brought *For the Crown* to the Camberwell Metropole, and especially in the case of the lady who played Mrs. Campbell's part."

An anecdote of Sir Joseph Barnby. At one of his Handel concerts a young contralto put in a high note instead of the less effective note prescribed. "Do you think you can improve upon such music as this?' the shocked conductor asked her. "Sir Joseph," she replied, "I have an E, and I don't see why I should not show it off." "I believe," rejoined Barnby, "that you have two knees; pray, however, do not show them off here."

As an instance of the intolerance with which the drama and its professors were regarded in the provincial towns last century, the following letter from a Birmingham clergyman to the Lord Chamberlain must appeal to many actors who find to-day that the lingering remnants of the old feeling militate seriously against their best efforts in the smaller towns. "1777, February 15.—I understand that there has been a petition presented to the House of Commons for leave to bring in a Bill to license a theatre at Birmingham. I need not say anything to your lordship upon the propriety or impropriety of such a business, as I am conscious that you will view it in its proper light, and consider it as a thing which must be productive of idleness and dissipation. But I have the satisfaction to inform your lordship that the greatest part of the inhabitants are very averse to such a measure, and dread the licensing of a theatre as an evil which they would wish to prevent; and from your wonted kindness to this town and its interests, I have presumed to beg the favour of your lordship to oppose the passing of such a Bill into law." One of the reasons given why the said Bill should be rejected was "because it will subject the inhabitants of Birmingham to the painful necessity of admitting players into the town, whether agreeable or disagreeable to the people; as there will then remain no power, either to the inhabitants or civil magistrate, to prevent their coming to act, or to correct any abuse which may arise from their acting."

Yet another suburban playhouse. The new theatre at Stratford, a very handsome building, was opened on August 31st, with a performance by the Haymarket company of *Henry IV.*

An eminent Midland journal writes of an article in our last issue:—"The question of dramatic criticism in the provinces is humorously and withal fairly discussed by Mr. Douglas Ginaodh, and whilst we agree that a large amount of excellent work is performed in this direction, it is equally true that the monetary limitations of the bulk of provincial newspaper proprietors are distinctly favourable to a perennial flow of mediocre sugar and water. To damn a performance as weak or vulgar at once raises the managerial hair, and to repeat the offence probably diverts the advertisements to the columns of a rival paper whose proprietor is prepared to supply treacle *ad lib.* for the necessary *quid pro quo.*

Most provincial newspaper critics could confirm Mr. Ginaodh's experience as to the peculiar methods of many travelling and resident managers and agents in advance." And not a few other papers have expressed themselves to the same effect.

THE cry is "still they come." New theatres are projected, Mr. Wyndham thinking of building one at the corner of Jermyn Street and the Haymarket.

MR. BEERBOHM TREE made a new departure at Islington last month by alternating Hotspur with Falstaff in the *Henry IV.* revival, Mr. Louis Calvert also sustaining both parts on alternate nights. Mr. Tree, as the fiery Percy, is described by the *Observer* as only indifferently good. It was a plucky attempt to grasp a part that Mr. Tree's most ardent admirers would not have expected him to play, and the audience gave it a qualified approval. Shakspere was not so popular with the Islingtonians as *Trilby*; that young lady in the previous week turned money away.

MR. RICHARD NORTHCOTT, the son of the dramatic critic of the *Daily Chronicle*, has written a Hungarian operetta entitled *Balorah*, which will possibly be produced in Buda-Pesth.

The Zankiwank and the Bletherwitch is the title of a fantastic and whimsical fairy tale written by Mr. S. J. Adair Fitz-Gerald, which Messrs. J. M. Dent & Co. are on the eve of publishing. Mr. Fitz Gerald is now engaged in dramatising the story for stage production during the coming winter season.

MR. MURRAY CARSON began an autumn provincial tour at the Devonshire Park Theatre, Eastbourne, on Aug. 31st, with *Rosemary*. In this way provincial audiences are afforded an opportunity of witnessing a joint author in a part of his own creation. Mr. Carson's performance as Sir Jasper Thorndyke differs in many respects from Mr. Wyndham's. His touch in the first three acts is a trifle weightier—upon him the burden of life seems to lie more heavily. Flashes of humour there are, however, which serve to give abundant light and variety to the reading.

MADAME BERNHARDT'S latest acquisition is a "tragedy of modern life," *La Ville Morte*, based by M. d'Annunzio upon a novel as yet unprinted.

Cendrillon, the new opera by M. Massenet and M. Henri Kain, will be read at the Opéra Comique at the end of September. The composer, who has been taking a rest in the country, is to be present.

MLLE. VAN ZANDT, after a long absence from Paris, is to reappear at the Opéra Comique for two months, beginning on November 20.

M. COQUELIN the elder has gained an unexpected advantage in his contest with the Comédie Française. M. Rambaud, the Minister of Fine Arts, has decided that the player shall pay the fines incurred by him for his performances at the Porte St. Martin, with the law costs; shall lose his retiring pension so long as he remains away from the Rue de Richelieu, and shall deposit with the manager of the Maison de Molière £4000, to be returned to him if he rejoins the company, but to be forfeited if he does not. Interest at the rate of three per cent. is to paid to him on the amount. This is a settlement on M. Coquelin's own terms, and it is not improbable that he will sacrifice the £4000 rather than lose his liberty. To some extent, therefore, the Moscow decree has become a dead letter.

MADAME BERNHARDT used to enjoy the distinction of being the thinnest player on the stage. "Get behind your malacca cane," said M. Coquelin, during a rehearsal, when she expressed a wish to hide herself from some-

one. Of this distinction, however, she was soon deprived by an American actor, Mr. Charles E. Fisher. He once played the apothecary in *Romeo and Juliet*, Miss Anderson being the heroine. On the following morning the Romeo asked the stage manager to select a fatter man. Mr. Fisher, he said, was so thin as to be virtually invisible.

GOETHE'S admirers are in a state of unspeakable joy over a discovery of very trifling importance. During his first visit to Italy in 1787-8, he fel madly in love with a beautiful Milanese, who, however, remembered that she was already betrothed. He took his disappointment to heart, as we may see from an autobiographical reference in his old age to the incident. Up to the present the identity of the fair Milanese has been unknown. Signor Valeri, the Roman librarian, has now ascertained that she was one Maddalena Ricci. In 1788 she married Giuseppe Volpato, son of the well-known engraver. Left a widow, she took unto herself a second husband in Francesco Finucci. She died at Rome in 1825, and was buried in the church of St. Pudentienne. Her grave may still be seen.

FRAU KATHARINA KLAPSKY, the German prima donna, died at Hamburg on September 22nd, after a short but severe illness. She was to have appeared in New York next winter. The daughter of a poor Hungarian shoemaker, she made a *début* in London, four years ago, as Fidelio, afterwards singing in Wagnerian operas. Though only thirty-one years of age, she had been thrice married. Her last husband was Herr Lohse, Sir Augustus Harris's conductor at Drury Lane. As a dramatic soprano she deservedly held a high position here and in Germany.

MUSICIANS of the old school continue to hold out against the influence of Wagner. Lately, in a speech respecting an application from the Berlin Academy of Music for an official subvention, Herr Joachim denounced the "pseudo-progress of Bayreuth," and warned his hearers against any undue encouragement thereof. Apropos of this, *Freund* recalls Rossini's dictum on *Tannhauser*. "You see," he said, "these operas cannot be judged at a single hearing. I have heard *Tannhäuser* once. But I am unable to form an opinion about it, as I shall be unable to hear it a second time."

HERR JOACHIM is justly proud of his abundant head of hair. Last year, in London, he had it trimmed by a bluff, outspoken barber, who knew him not. "That will do," he said, almost as soon as the operation had begun. "But," remonstrated the barber, "your hair is still much too long." "Indeed?" "Yes; look in the glass. Are you not like a poor orchestra fiddler?"

SIGNOR ALEXANDER SALVINI is now at his father's Italian villa, and is recovering from a rather serious attack of illness.

A CURIOUS type of theatre-maniac died not long ago in Florence. In his appreciation of the drama and of music he had no equal, and he made no distinction of schools. Until lately he never missed a first night, whether the play was new or old. Suddenly, however, he was no longer seen in his usual post. He had bidden his last farewell to the play, not because he was old, but because the theatre was no longer what it used to be. When any new work was mentioned to him he would only shake his head and say: "I would rather not see it," and he did not see it. But he would read attentively all the bills on the walls, the criticisms which appeared in the papers, and so forth; also, he would smoke his after-dinner cigar at the theatre doors, count all the people who entered, and look quite triumphant when he thought that the receipts were good. Often he would remain outside the theatre until the performance was over. He would no longer

enter a theatre, but the theatre he could not leave as long as he had strength to drag himself to it.

THE cry for protection in matters of art has again been raised on the other side of the Atlantic. The New York *Musical Age*, in an article on "America for Americans," discusses "the craze for patronising foreign artists, the eagerness with which people rush to hear them, and the liberality with which great fortunes are flung at their feet. A singer or instrumentalist has only to elicit applause in London or Paris or Berlin, and secure judicious publication of the fact in the United States, to come here and draw immense crowds, pocket fabulous numbers of dollars, and return home with a bank account that could not have been accumulated in double the length of time in any other country on the face of the earth. This disposition to follow up foreign artists, and pay extravagant tribute to reputation earned abroad, is so well known that European singers and players look upon the United States as a vast treasureland which is a legitimate field for extortion and fortune-hunting. They come here and demand two or three times the remuneration they can get anywhere else; we weakly yield; and they go back to their homes with the spoils. Meanwhile, American artists suffer from neglect, or at the best manage merely to 'get along,' while those who in many cases are less deserving carry away the rewards of foreign fame and shrewd advertising."

MADAME BERNHARDT has something to say on this subject. She writes to the *Musical Age*:—"I regret that you have no Conservatoire as yet. Many of your men and women only need a little training to become good artists. If you had a Conservatoire in America there would be no room here for foreign companies, and some of your young actresses would soon develop into 'stars' of the first magnitude. A little training, with their natural grace and love of the æsthetic to help it, would enrich America with the best artists in the world. How is it that there are not a few rich, influential people to found a Conservatoire? I do not know if I shall ever come back to America, but if I do, I most devoutly hope my dream will have been realised. In the name of your young artists I cry for 'a Conservatoire! a Conservatoire!' I make this appeal for the sake of the American stage, which should and could support itself. I make it on behalf of American literature and of American authors, some of whom, despite their real and sterling talent, cannot now get their plays interpreted. I make it, lastly, in the name of this public, which is longing to applaud its own artists and its own writers."

PERHAPS the best comment on the cry raised by the *Musical Age* is supplied in a letter to that paper from a Chicago professor. "Clamouring to-day for the supremacy of American art in America—I mean shutting ourselves, under the guise of patriotism, within the Chinese walls of a monstrous complacency and ill-advised egotism—would effectually," he writes, "put an end to all art, American and foreign. Music is becoming more and more cosmopolitan. The absorption of nationalities in the crucible of genius pervades the whole field of art. There never has been in Europe any discrimination against foreign artists. Gluck, Meyerbeer, Rossini were idolised in France, as Handel was in England. Wagner is to-day the god of musical Paris. The Conservatoires of the Old World have professors from all countries. I am yet to hear of the country which at any time of its existence insisted upon having programmes exclusivel made up of native talent."

An account of the weekly salaries received by well-known singers in London and New York has recently been published. The following is of interest:—

	London.	New York.
Jean de Reszké	500 dols.	1,250 dols.
Edouard de Reszké	300 „	800 „
Plançon	200 „	500 „
Melba	500 „	1,500 „
Calvé	500 „	1,200 „
Nordica	300 „	800 „
Eames	300 „	800 „
Saville	100 „	300 „
Totals	2,700 dols.	7,150 dols.

Mr. Joseph Jefferson is about to start upon a tour which includes what to him is practically new territory, and which will last about fourteen weeks. Not without a pang will he quit his place at Buzzard's Bay, with its water front of no less than one mile and a quarter. His love of the stage, however, is as keen as ever.

We much regret to hear of the death of Mr. James Lewis, which occurred in New York early in September. He was a valuable member of Mr. Augustin Daly's company, chiefly as funny old men in a fix, but also as Touchstone, Sir Toby Belch, Grumio, and Launce. He was about sixty years of age.

Mr. Daly will present *Much Ado About Nothing* this season, with Miss Rehan as Beatrice. *Henry IV.* will also be given, with Mr. Charles Richman as Prince Hal.

It is reported that M. Lasalle, the baritone, who retired from the stage two years ago to go into business, will sing again in America this winter.

Miss Olga Nethersole will appear in Boston on October 9th in Mr. H. V. Esmond's new play, *My Lady Virtue*.

Sue, by Bret Harte and Mr. T. Edgar Pemberton, has achieved good success in America.

Mr. Harrison Fiske, we are pleased to hear, has recovered from his long illness, and is again actively editing the *New York Mirror*.

Mr. Charles Bertram, the conjurer, has been engaged by Mr. Charles Frohman to support Mr. Albert Chevalier at the Garrick Theatre, New York.

Miss Minnie Fiske has secured the sole rights of Mr. Hardy's dramatisation of his novel, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*.

Trilby has exhausted its popularity in America. "What," asks the New York *Spirit*, "has become of the novel that was so wonderful to persons who had not read Mürger and Thackeray? What has become of the dramatisation of *Trilby* that was going to surpass *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in permanent popularity? How many people read the *Trilby* novel now? How many *Trilby* companies are preparing to go on the road this season? Never was a fad more foolish, and never did a fad of the same extent have a more speedy and inglorious ending."

If the New York *Spirit* is not joking, Mr. Robert Hilliard, the American actor, has secured a huge advertisement at a minimum of expense. Entering a Lexington-avenue car by mistake, he transferred himself to a car in Twenty-third-street, and refused to pay another fare. The car was

stopped, a crowd collected, Mr. Hilliard was arrested, reporters came in swarms, the papers had long accounts of the affair, with pictures of the actor, the conductor, the policeman, the car, the assemblage, and the great city generally. "At the regular rates," says the *Spirit*, "such an advertising display would have cost about 50,000 dollars; it did not cost Mr. Hilliard an extra five cents. Losing dogs or diamonds is nothing to this."

Mr. Bronson Howard has returned from London to New York.

The death is announced of Professor Crouch, the author of "Kathleen Mavourneen," at the age of ninety. His career had been singularly varied. He was by turns an actor, a musician, a singer, a sailor, a foundryman, a journalist, a composer, a conductor, a soldier, and a teacher. He played the 'cello in the Drury Lane orchestra in the twenties; he was a soloist at the funeral of William IV. and at the coronation of Queen Victoria; he conducted at the old Astor-place Opera House in New York. Of late years he had lived in America, after fighting on the side of the South. He died in poverty.

Boston can boast of possessing a wag. He has just brought out a musical dictionary. Some of his definitions are almost Johnsonian in satirical intention. "A Conservatory," he says, "is a school for music where four or more students are taught all manner of instruments at the same time. At some Conservatories holes are bored in the doors, so that, if the trustees come along during lesson hours, they may see that the students are embracing their opportunities, and not their professors." "Chopin: A Polish pianist and composer, who exercised a peculiar fascination over young ladies of rank from his ability to play strictly in time with one hand while he indulged in the 'tempo rubato' with the other. His waltzes, polonaises, nocturnes, berceuses, and other forms of piano composition are expressive of sentimental moods, and are much affected by young women without the ability to render them properly."

THE THEATRE.

NOVEMBER, 1896.

Our Watch Tower.

AN UNHAPPY CRITIC.

IT is always agreeable, as we remarked last month, to contemplate the performances of Mr. Clement Scott on the stage of dramatic criticism. He is even more diverting as a controversialist when anybody takes occasion to question his infallibility. Mingled with our delight, however, is a feeling of sadness that a writer of no ordinary gifts should expose himself to derision. Can it be that old age is coming upon him too rapidly? Although he is not yet sixty, his once fine constitution appears to have been unable to hold out against nearly four decades of literary work, especially in the way of first-night criticism, descriptive reporting, special holiday articles, and verses of the kind made familiar to us in his often excellent *Lays of a Londoner*. His well-known shortcomings as a critic—his emotional precipitancy of judgment, his tendency to go to extremes of praise or dispraise, his utter inability to take a broad view of dramatic matters—have acquired a new prominence within the last few years. His onslaught upon *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray* was as significant in one way as his eulogy upon Miss Nethersole's acting in *The Transgressor* was in another. Nor does his temper seem to have become sunnier with the increasing consciousness of his decline. He continues to criticise with the greatest vigour at his command, but objects to be criticised himself. If the lash he so freely applies to others is applied to him, even in a pleasant way, he writhes, cries out at the top of his voice, gives vent to his lacerated feelings in cheap nouns and adjectives, and then, bursting with tears, entreats us to remember what he has done for the Drama. Not being exactly fitted to handle a rapier, he has recourse to weapons of a

different kind. "The constitution of his mind," Macaulay writes of Voltaire, "resembled the constitution of those bodies in which the slightest scratch of a bramble or the bite of a gnat never fails to fester. With all his great talents and all his long experience of the world, he had no more self-command than a petted child or a hysterical woman. Whenever he was mortified, he exhausted the whole rhetoric of anger and sorrow to express his mortification." Mr. Scott, we understand, has more than once whimpered, "Why can't they leave me alone?" The remedy for his sufferings lies in his own hands. Let him observe a little more caution in the exercise of his power, which, though over-estimated, is still considerable. It is not always well that the possessor of a giant's strength should use it as a giant. Mr. Scott might do worse than bear in mind a few words uttered by Oxenford at a dinner given in his honour. "I have ever tried," he said, "to do my duty to the public as a critic; thank God, however, I have never caused an actor's wife or child to cry."

Of Mr. Scott's extreme sensitiveness to criticism of himself another illustration has just been afforded. In the *Saturday Review* for September 12, an anonymous writer, well-known almost from the beginning to be Mr. Max Beerbohm, indulged in some clever and not ill-natured banter at the expense of the critic's efforts as a "poet." Four beautiful lines—

> Bexhill-on-Sea is the haven for me,
> Whene'er my nerves are depressed;
> For there's a retreat where you golf and you eat,
> And you sleep and you dream and you rest—

were quoted as seeming to epitomise the bitter tragedy of their writer's life. Wordsworth, it was remarked, loved Nature in all her manifestations; Shelley was more particularly the poet of the Clouds; Swinburne was the poet of the Sea; Mr. Clement Scott was the poet of the Seaside. "Circumstances, the curse of poets, compel this man to live in London, driving him in and out of glaring theatres, up and down Fleet-street. It is fearful to think of his soul being slowly crushed by so uncongenial a life. Many, many are the praises he has written about this or that seaside resort. Some of them, indeed, have evidently been written during a happy holiday, and are instinct with the joyous spirit of Saturday-to-Monday. . . . Is it not a tragic thing that this poet should be chained to our metropolis, eating his heart out for the happier clime, escaping so seldom from his harsh bondage? . . . From the merely literary standpoint his work is not good. He writes that always anomalous thing, a poet's prose, sadly plethoric and redundant. As criticism his work is still worse. Cooped in the gilded refinement of a stage-

box, Scott's soul becomes restless and intractable. The glare of the footlights blinds his clear, poetic vision. . . . Now we earnestly appeal to the dramatic profession, ever generous in helping the oppressed, and not only to that profession, but also to all whose hearts have been, like ours, gladdened by the poetry of this man, to raise some great fund which will enable him to flee away, with his broken heart and his split infinitives, to the shores of Bexhill-on-Sea, there to work out his genius." And so on to the end of the chapter, or rather of the article.

No one could have been more effectually drawn than Mr. Scott was by this piece of well-worded pleasantry. Ordinary wisdom, of course, would have counselled him to pass it over in silence, or at least, as far as his temperament would admit, with an appearance of good humour. As it was, he displayed a degree of irritation on the subject which proved that the arrow was quivering in the very centre of the mark. He filled over two closely-printed columns of the *Era* with a recital of his woes. "Come out of your hole, Rat!" That is the heading of his article. "I have been bitten," he says, "by a Rat. A nasty, mangy ill-conditioned, scurrilous Rat has crept out of the wainscoting of the old *Saturday Review* office and snapped at me when I was asleep. That Rat has done no harm. He tried to get at my throat and pin me with his venomous fangs; but he was a sickly, weakly, half-starved sort of thing, and only succeeded in biting the hand that has in all probability shaken his ill-favoured paw, and done him many a service and good turn. But this is ever the way with Rats! They are vermin, and ought to be nailed to the barn door." Mr. Scott, as is his wont, becomes reminiscent as he continues. His father, he tells us, helped to start the *Saturday Review*, and was one of its most frequent contributors to the end of his life. What bearing this has on the question at issue we are not quite able to see. Confessedly "sick" that the Rat should be allowed to write in the same columns as Mr. Bernard Shaw and others, Mr. Scott goes on to point out that the lines turned against him are misquotations—we are sure some are—and that his eulogy of Bexhill-on-Sea was simply a bit of doggerel in a letter never intended for publication. This, says Mr. Scott, with a fine appreciation of his own eminence, "is something like playing Chopin's lovely air in his funeral march to the time of a jig, a waltz, a galop, or a comic song." Mr. Scott "does not understand the meaning of 'split infinitives,'" and his writings bear sufficient testimony to his sincerity on the point. For the rest, in a characteristic passage, he protests against the attempt to "run down the reputation of

a man who has fought for the stage and its best interests before you were sucking a bottle."

It is needless, of course, to dwell at any length upon Mr. Scott's latest deliverance, which speaks for itself. Indeed, we felt strongly tempted to ignore the matter altogether. However, Mr. Scott is still supposed to have the power to make or mar a theatrical enterprise by his criticism, and it is as well to take notice of so curious a self-revelation on his part. Besides that, *The Theatre* is likely to be the chief quarry of theatrical historians in the future, who would not readily pardon an omission of the kind if it occurred. Mr. Max Beerbohm, in a signed letter to the *Saturday Review*, has already drawn attention to some faults in Mr. Scott's judicial and temperate article—his inconsistencies, quaint metaphors, and so forth. With these, therefore, we do not deal. On one point, we may remark, Mr. Scott is indeed "unhappy." He seeks to make capital out of the anonymity of his critics. Has he put his name to everything he has written? Let him remember his contributions to *Truth*, the *Hawk*, *To-Day*, and other periodicals. He may not have forgotten certain articles in *Echoes from the Clubs*, long since defunct. One was entitled "Oh! que j'aime les militaires," another "Encore que j'aime les militaires." On one occasion he was subjected to a sharp cross-examination about both by Mr. (now Sir) George Lewis. Mr. Scott's lachrymose reference to his father's connection with the *Saturday Review* strikes us not only as uncalled for, but as opposed to his own argument. One conspicuous feature of that paper in the times he speaks of was the anonymity of its contributors, and Mr. Scott the elder, as one of the number, must have fought in its columns with his vizor well kept down. Nor has Mr. Clement Scott always disdained the aid of the pseudonymous; at any rate, we have not yet had the honour of making the acquaintance of anyone rightly called Saville Rowe. On the whole, we are inclined to think that the less this too sensitive critic talks about rats out of wainscoting the better. His long experience ought to teach him that honest and good journalism without anonymity is impossible in many ways, and also that those who live in glasshouses should not be in a hurry to throw stones.

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MISS JESSIE MILLWARD.

In "BOYS TOGETHER."

Portraits.

MISS MILLWARD.

AS Mr. Abingdon exists in the minds of the playgoers only as a hardened villain, ready at all times for "treasons, stratagems, and spoils," of any and every description, so, on the other hand, is Miss Jessie Millward the embodiment of all that is good and beautiful. No Adelphi melodrama would be properly complete were she not at hand with guileless appearance and soft speech to play the heroine, to let down her hair in trying situations, to repulse the advances of the wicked with vehemence and scorn, and to hang upon the hero's breast in the final tableau just before the "ting-ting" of the prompter's bell brings down the curtain and the orchestra break into the first bars of "God Save the Queen." When in *One of the Best* we saw Miss Millward impersonating one of the worst instead of treading the stage as the brightest and purest of her sex, the shock was severe. Fortunately she has now returned to the old familiar path; but the result of another such experiment might in some cases be almost fatal. Beginning her stage career in 1881 with the Kendals at the St. James's, Miss Millward was for some time with the Lyceum company as Hero in *Much Ado About Nothing* on Mr. Irving's first revival of the play and Marie in *Louis XI.*, and accompanying him on one of his American tours. But melodrama had its attractions for her, and her success in *The Harbour Lights* attached her to the Adelphi company for some years, during which *The Bells of Haslemere* and *The Union Jack* enjoyed long runs and great popularity. From 1889 until 1894 she was more or less of a wanderer, visiting America with Mr. Terriss, and appearing at the Lyceum as Julie De Mortimar in *Richelieu*, and Queen Eleanor in *Becket*, for a few performances as a preparation for playing it with the Lyceum company in America. At Drury Lane she took part in *A Million of Money*, *The Prodigal Daughter*, and other pieces of the same class. She returned to the Adelphi to the satisfaction of her admirers for the production of *The Fatal Card*, and since then has appeared in each succeeding play produced at this popular theatre, scoring a particular success as Ethel Wood in *Boys Together*, in which character the accompanying portrait represents her. And at the Adelphi, if public favour be consulted, will she be found for many a long day to come.

The Round Table.

THE STAGE UNDER VICTORIA.

By Henry Elliott.

WHEN a few weeks ago, the reign of Queen Victoria reached the point at which it began to exceed in length the longest rule enjoyed by any English monarch, among the congratulatory messages received by her Majesty were some from companies of actors performing in the provinces. The Queen had expressed a desire that there might be no public demonstrations until she had completed—as she will do in the course of 1897—the sixtieth year of her occupancy of the throne. The players, however, might be excused for giving immediate vent to their enthusiasm and loyalty. Her Majesty has always been a good friend to the English stage. Before she assumed the crown, it was a visit paid by her to the old Coburg which caused it to be re-christened the Victoria—afterwards to be known popularly as "Queen Victoria's own theyater." After her accession in 1837, till the decease of the Prince Consort in 1861, her Majesty was a frequent and discriminating patron of the play, honouring with her presence the best efforts of the managers of those days, and from time to time "commanding" performances either at the ordinary playhouses or at Windsor Castle. When, in the year last named, the heaviest sorrow of her life overtook her, she withdrew into a privacy which, for two full decades, shut out from her gaze, though not necessarily from her mind, the doings of the dramatic world. In 1881, happily, she was induced by the Prince of Wales to witness, at Abergeldie, a performance of *The Colonel*; and since then she has shown in many ways that her old interest in the stage had been but suspended, not destroyed. Since 1861 she has not entered a theatre; but she has invited leading actor-managers, from Sir Henry Irving downwards, to give dramatic representations at royal residences; and has caused prominent players to be presented to her; and, last but not least, by bestowing upon Henry Irving the dignity of knighthood, she has formally recognised the right of the actor to rank ocially with other devotees of the liberal arts. Acting, as a pro-

fession, now has the direct sanction and approval of the fount of honour in these islands; and it owes that recognition to the gracious sympathy and appreciation of the present wielder of the sceptre.

Her Majesty, as Queen, has been contemporary with some notable developments of our stage. In the year of her accession, Macready became lessee of Covent Garden, and, with a company which included at various periods Phelps, James Anderson, Miss Faucit, and Miss Taylor, Mme. Vestris, Mrs. Nesbitt, the Keeleys, and Charles Mathews, revived Shaksperean plays, and produced for the first time such representative works as Bulwer's *Lady of Lyons*, Knowles's *Love*, Leigh Hunt's *Legend of Florence*, and Boucicault's *London Assurance*. It was during Macready's stay at Covent Garden that the veteran Charles Kemble made his *rentrée* by the Queen's command. In 1841 Macready migrated to Drury Lane, where were seen in succession the *Marino Faliero* of Byron, *The Patrician's Daughter* of Westland Marston, and *The Blot i' the Scutcheon* of Robert Browning. Here Mrs. Stirling and Miss Horton made their mark. Here Charles Kean was seen. Here were produced Mrs. Lovell's *Ingomar* and Charles Reade's *Gold*. Here G. V. Brooke strutted and fretted his little hour on the boards. In 1837 Benjamin Webster had begun at the Haymarket a *régime* during which Buckstone and Mrs. Glover and Mme. Vestris and Mme. Celeste made their early successes, and during which Bulwer's *Money*, Jerrold's *Time Works Wonders*, Knowles's *Love Chase*, and works by Westland Marston were introduced to the public. After Webster came Buckstone as actor-manager, and with him Compton and old comedy, Miss Sedgwick and *An Unequal Match*, Sothern and *Our American Cousin*. At the Adelphi, shortly after the Queen's accession, Wright and Paul Bedford began to charm the lieges, who succumbed also to the fascinations of the Keeleys and of Webster, as well as to those of Buckstonian and Boucicaultian melodrama—those being the days of *The Flowers of the Forest* and *The Colleen Bawn*. Her Majesty's playgoing years covered, further, the triumphs of Robson and the Wigans at the Olympic; likewise the vogue, at the Lyceum, of English opera under Balfe, adaptations from Dickens (with the Keeleys), Planché's extravaganzas (with Mme. Vestris and Charles Mathews), romantic melodrama (with Charles Dillon and the youthful Marie Wilton), and so forth and so forth.

Since 1861, when the Queen, overwhelmed by her bereavement, ceased to witness entertainments, how much has happened, albeit the years be only thirty-five in number! Much progress,

one may fairly claim, has been made, and in more than one particular. Take the supply of plays, for example. The Bulwer-Marston-Planché-Buckstone-Boucicault period was followed by one in which the lead was taken by such men as Stirling Coyne, Leicester Buckingham, Bayle Bernard, Edmund Falconer, Watts Phillips, Andrew Halliday, Edward Stirling, Mark Lemon, Maddison Morton, John Oxenford, and Palgrave Simpson, who dealt mainly in adaptations from French plays and English novels. A few of the products of this time survive, notably in pieces by Watts Phillips, Morton, and Palgrave Simpson; but it was a time of comparative sterility, fortunately succeeded by the era of Charles Reade, Tom Taylor, H. J. Byron, Albery, T. W. Robertson, and Robert Reece, all of whom relied mainly, if not wholly, on their own invention and observation, and prepared us for still better things to come. They led the way in breaking through the dependence upon foreign wares, and in aiming (at any rate) at genuine transcripts from life. Bulwer, Planché, and Boucicault still remain unrivalled in their particular *genre*, but against Marston we may fairly pit the late W. G. Wills, and against Buckstone the late Henry Pettitt. Mr. W. S. Gilbert has given us the fairy play and the eccentric comedy, both new (in their peculiar topsy-turvydom) to our national drama. Messrs. Herman Merivale and F. C. Burnand have preserved and even heightened the traditions of the poetical drama and of burlesque. Mr. Carton has revived memories of Albery and Robertson, and Messrs. Pinero, Jones, and (to a certain extent) Grundy have applied themselves to the dramatic treatment of present-day ideas. No one whose memory (or reading) can go back to the middle period of the Queen's reign can doubt that from the appearance of Robertson on the scene there has been a steady development for good in the aim and quality of dramatic work.

One notes a concurrent development in the method of presenting plays. Though in the matter of care and costliness it would be difficult to surpass the productions of Macready, Charles Kean, and Mme. Vestris, the general level of dramatic interpretation has risen gradually from their day to ours. This is owing partly to the increase in artistic and scientific means and opportunities, but more to the spread of education, the more exacting demands of the public, the ampler equipment of managers and players. Webster, Buckstone, Miss Herbert, Miss Hodson did much managerially in their day; but mark the strides made, in later years, by the Bancrofts, Henry Irving, Messrs. Hare and Kendal, Mr. Wilson Barrett,

Mr. Wyndham, and the young school represented by Mr. Alexander and Mr. Tree. The system of "stock" companies, once so prevalent, has been considerably modified, with the result that managers, while maintaining a sort of basis in the shape of a small permanent staff, are able to make, from time to time, special engagements which tend largely to perfection of *ensemble*. What the Bancrofts learned from Mme. Vestris Henry Irving improved upon, bringing all the other arts into the service of the theatre—both behind the curtain and in front of it. There is still much to be achieved in the theatrical world, into which the syndicate system and the speculative outsider have intruded themselves with unfortunate effect. But, on the whole, the stage is in a healthier and more promising condition to-day than it was when her Majesty began to reign.

With the growth of population and of culture has come a growth in the number of playgoers and in public attachment to the stage. How enormous that growth has been may be gauged by the corresponding increase in the number of theatres in London. Three years after the Queen's accession the Princess's and the Royalty were opened. In 1843 came the Act of Parliament which abolished the patent privileges, placed all the theatres under the jurisdiction of the Lord Chamberlain, and simultaneously gave a great impetus to theatrical speculation. To 1858 belongs the present Adelphi (lately, of course, enlarged); to 1865, the present Surrey; to 1866, the discarded Holborn (Mirror, and Duke's); to 1867, the played-out Queen's; to 1868, the present Globe and Gaiety; to 1869, the Charing Cross (Folly and Toole's). The old Philharmonic, the present Vaudeville, and the ancestor of the present Court, all belong to 1870. From 1871 date the present Opéra Comique and the Alhambra (as a theatre). The Criterion was opened in 1874, the disused Imperial in 1876, the Savoy and Comedy in 1881, the Avenue and Novelty in 1882, the present Prince of Wales's and the Empire (as a theatre) in 1884, Terry's in 1887, and the Shaftesbury in 1888. Of late years we have had a new Philharmonic (the Grand, Islington), a new Pavilion, a new Olympic, the Palace, the Lyric, the Garrick, and Daly's; and before the Queen celebrates the sixtieth year of her reign, we shall have, in the Haymarket, a new Her Majesty's. Altogether, during these six decades, the West and East End (ruling out the purely suburban theatres and those theatres which have simply replaced predecessors) gained altogether twenty-four new playhouses, of which, however, four are now unused, while three have been devoted to the supply of "variety shows." This in itself indicates how greatly the public interest in the drama, and the con-

sequent demand for theatrical accommodation, has grown in the past sixty years.

CRITICISM IN THE PROVINCES.

By Douglas Ginaodh.

WHAT is the object of this discussion? Is it to indulge in personalities? If so, we had better stop; our personalities are not worth discussion. To me, the object has been to draw attention to provincial criticism and to suggest means of improvement in it. I have been careful to touch my personal experiences only in so far as they assisted in achieving this object; and, if I may appeal to authority, have we not Mr. Walkley's own authority for regarding dramatic criticism as a form of autobiography? I am very sorry that the discussion has been dragged down to the personal level, and even to the still lower level of assumed motive. Another direction in which the discussion promises to become useless is that of drifting into the universal nuisance of opinion. Let me say at once that, in so far as my previous articles are concerned, I attach no value to opinion of any kind, being concerned merely with actual facts and the unmistakable meanings of them. Anything in the nature of opinion in those articles has been purely incidental. Yet it is necessary to touch those matters of personality and opinion referred to by my opponents if we are to restore the purpose with which my articles have been written and which it will be better, from all standpoints, to keep in view.

First, then, observe this quotation from my first article by Mr. Edgar Pemberton:—"Mr. Ginaodh is very severe on a critic who confessed that in his notices he recorded the manner in which plays are received by audiences." Now compare my actual words:—"A provincial critic . . . once expressed himself to me as follows:—'Don't get it into your head that what I write has any necessary connection with my own opinions. . . . I try to realise what the average member of the audience thinks of the play. This is what I write, and the next day, when the average reader picks up my work, he declares me a very clever fellow. You know, the best of us are liable to consider people clever because they happen to see things as we do.' Does this blame anybody for recording the manner in which plays are received?" The misrepresentation is too obvious to need further reference, and I can only express my deep regret that anyone should so misquote another. But I fear that there is something still more to be regretted in Mr. Pemberton's article. Having suggested that my experience as a

critic was short and recent, he goes on to note how my editor restricted me and then:—"Provincial editors, having satisfied themselves that the writers they engage to 'do' their criticisms are straightforward men who understand their work, leave them with perfectly free hands. . . . If their work is dishonestly or badly done it will be quickly found out, and there will be an end of it." From which the readers of *The Theatre* are courteously left to infer that I am not a straightforward man, that I do not understand my work, and that I am in the habit of doing my work badly and dishonestly. I must say that I have rarely met more painful suggestions by one writer about another. In reply, I shall only observe that when I left the employment of the editor above referred to, it was on an agreement that my situation should be kept open for three months, to be ready for me in case I should like to return. It is with many regrets and apologies that I make these personal and irrelevant remarks, to which I have been reduced by Mr. Edgar Pemberton. I am quite certain that I could not possibly treat anybody in such a manner in any circumstances whatever.

For the rest, the strictures of Mr. Pemberton and Mr. Lewis only tend to prove the truth of my contention that "provincial criticism was a sadly insufficient thing." For example, take the foregoing specimens of Mr. Pemberton's own criticism of myself. Could anything be more provincial? Could anything be more insufficient? It consists in misrepresentation, in misquotation, and in attributing unworthy motives not only without the facts, but in actual opposition to them. However, I have to thank Mr. Pemberton for having afforded me so excellent an object-lesson in the limitations and insufficiencies of criticism in the provinces. In this respect his contribution to the discussion is of considerable value. Nor is it solely in the foregoing specimens that he shows how poor a thing can provincial criticism be. Thus he lays down the law for the provincial critic:—"He must remember that he is writing for the pit and gallery as well as for the circle and stalls, and if he is careful he will, without being either too severe or over-fulsome, be able to let playgoers of all tastes know whether they had better go to the theatre 'this week' or keep their money in their pockets until something else comes along." How truly journalistic! how truly provincial! how truly insufficient! Had Mr. Pemberton studied carefully all his life to get away from all true notions of dramatic criticism, he could scarcely have been more successful. In all the categories laid down here, not a single one has the least connection with dramatic criticism, properly understood. Primarily, dramatic criticism consists in two things: first, to estimate the value of the play

as dramatic art; secondly, to estimate the attempts of the actors to present the meaning, the purpose, the force, and the effect of the play. This is the object of the true critic, not to concern himself about writing either "for the pit" or "for the circle." In short, the true critic is unconscious of every one of the prime functions attributed to him by Mr. Pemberton. Fancy a man going to the theatre with the object of letting the public know when they are to go to the theatre or not! How does he know what they may want to see? Why should he concern himself with it at all? These objects are best fulfilled by leaving them alone. If the value of a play is accurately estimated on the standards of dramatic art, and if the actor's attempts are accordingly estimated, then Mr. Pemberton's missions will be accomplished quite incidentally, with this advantage in addition, that there will be some real dramatic criticism. It is most strange that men live their lives in journalism, in criticism, and on the stage without even really grasping this simple principle, which is an essential axiom in any adequate understanding of the drama. As to reporting, by all means let us have it, and much of it, so long as it is true. I question whether it would not be better were provincial papers to confine themselves generally to bare statements of actuality. We cannot have too many of such facts; but no quantity of them can amount to criticism except under the treatment which I have described.

Now, let us not turn moralists. Trying to appear more moral than we are only results in making us really less moral than we are. Having no morals of my own, and seeing no immediate need for any, I shall stick to actualities, and leave Mr. Pemberton and Mr. Lewis to supply the ethical ellipses of the discussion. I am sorry to shock them, but it really cannot be helped if we are to have the plain truth about criticism in the provinces.

I therefore proceed to set forth further experiences of the kind which my critics have never seen, and at which they are so deeply shocked. As I write, I have in my possession two complimentary tickets, by which I have come in the following highly-suspicious circumstances. A handsome young man called on me in my capacity as a *provincial* editor, and set before me a fine manuscript in which his particular musical comedy beat all the others hollow. He was an advance agent, courteous as an Ambassador and full of tact as a party politician. The MS. was intended as a preliminary notice, and it was accompanied by judiciously-selected paragraphs from notices in the leading papers of the country, a wise number of the said extracts being quoted for my benefit in the "notice." Without even the delicacy of waiting for my decision, this advance agent proceeded to set down my two complimentary

tickets. As I said, I have them now, and I mean to use them! A bad case, is it not? Well, my only explanation is that I said to the agent:—"I shall not use your MS. However, I shall see that you have your 'prelim.' But this is in the ordinary course of business, as it is properly part of our work to let the people know what is coming next week. Now, if you leave these tickets with me, your notice will be written by one of my subordinates, without his knowing anything at all about tickets. If, on the other hand, you do not leave me the tickets, I shall write the notice myself, in which case the work will probably be better done. You see, therefore, that you get nothing, or less than nothing, in return for your two good tickets. I am prepared to accept any number of tickets from you under these circumstances, but I must say at the same time that I don't see how you can rationally give them." Thus I talked, and still I have the tickets.

In the course of last month I read several gratuitous manuscripts of preliminary notices, which I afterwards saw published elsewhere in the name of dramatic criticism! I put the note of exclamation here for the benefit of the reader, for I have myself seen too much of this thing to be in the least excited over it. As a matter of fact, I am at any time in a position to send Mr. Pemberton or Mr. Lewis the manuscripts of dramatic critiques written for me by advance agents and rejected by me as unfit for publication. In a very recent case I saw an editorial friend send the proof of a certain article to the manager concerned, with a member of the advertising staff, to negotiate for the thing as an advertisement!—so fulsome were the terms of the "criticism," probably written by the reporter under the influence of the gooseberry champagne which I have described before, and which seems to have so excited the spirit of Mr. Pemberton. What abnormally virtuous regions Mr. Pemberton and Mr. Lewis must live in, never having come across these shocking agents, under whose influence I must be rapidly losing any trace of morality that ever found a lodgment in my composition! Such innocence among editors is really idyllic, and were it not that I consider their abnormally high virtue proof against all my facts, I could not with comfort afflict them with the temptations of this new and highly-dangerous knowledge that I am imparting to their unsullied spirits. Henceforth it shall be in the category of my moral ambitions to meet such men as Mr. Pemberton and Mr. Lewis, now that they have claimed the existence of such men possible; and should I ever satisfy that ambition, I shall hail "the sum of good" as a degree nearer accomplishment. In the meantime, striving along upon my lower moral plane, I must make the

best I can of my critiques and of my advance agents. If this discussion is to do any good, we had better be very plain. It is bad enough that we newspaper people should be doing wrong without deceiving ourselves and others. Let the facts be known. The result must tend to benefit the stage, the drama, and the press alike.

By A Manchester Journalist.

I MAKE bold to think that the dramatic traditions which cluster so thickly round the very name of Manchester, giving it an unrivalled histrionic renown among provincial centres, claim for it a voice in this discussion of criticism in the provinces. It seems to me that no one is likely to question this assertion, though Mr. Clement Scott, not to be less maladroit and unapproachably superior than usual, did recently describe our city as "somewhere up north." If I may be permitted under the mask of anonymity to offer a critical opinion upon dramatic criticism as it exists in Manchester, I have no hesitation in stating that as sound and as thoughtful critiques appear in the Manchester papers as in any others printed outside London. At the same time, I must be careful for my anonymous reputation to add that this is a general statement, glossing over, as it does, the singular effusions which from time to time startle the readers of one particular journal. On some papers—in days gone by especially—the critic, picked out indiscriminately from amongst the reporters, with never a thought as to whether he knew the difference between *East Lynne* and *Charley's Aunt*, has often hied him bravely to the unlucky theatre, hugely, but oh! how unconsciously, to entertain his readers in the next morning's issue. These were, though, only occasional aberrations on the part of influential organs, and the particular genius responsible for them now exercises his unique imagination upon the daily fluctuations of the pig market and the psychical characteristics of the police court. This, however, by the way. Yet it serves to show that the fierce eye of criticism is as much centred upon the criticism itself as upon the dramatic fare which is being criticised.

We have here in Manchester two morning, two evening, and two Sunday papers, which, between them, turn out every week at least six columns of dramatic criticism, apart altogether from dramatic gossip. Two of these papers employ men for dramatic purposes exclusively. One of the morning journals retains two or three specialists to deal with the principal productions. In the other instances, the work is done, on the evening papers by the

editors and sub-editors, and on the morning papers by the reporters, and forms a part of these gentlemen's duties. Nevertheless, whoever the writers be, I need hardly say that the fact of other papers in the town employing special men, together with the lively interest the Manchester public exhibit in theatrical matters, necessarily demands that the criticism shall all-round reach a high standard of merit. Criticism is nowhere more outspoken than it is in Manchester. Playgoers wish it, and the powers that be in the various offices encourage plain speaking. Perhaps in the case of one eminent organ the editorial injunction to "fear not to blame" has the effect of sometimes causing the critics to stray into the abhorrent path of hypercriticism. Still, to generalise again, the work is excellently done—is done with fairness and ability; and plays are viewed, not through the spectacles of the London critics, who have sampled nearly everything for us beforehand, but from an original and unbiased standpoint. Only in the case—and that rarely—of one solitary newspaper here are the remarks of Mr. Douglas Ginaodh concerning the fagged-out reporter-critic in the least degree applicable. Not once in a year has a reporter half-a-dozen engagements in a day, and even if he is a little tired by the evening, surely it does not require any mighty concentration of intellect to write a "stick" about the production for the twentieth time within the precincts of the same theatre of *The Grip of Iron* or *A Royal Marriage*. For these are the kind of pieces a reporter is "turned on to" if he has not had an engagement later than 3 o'clock in the afternoon. If it is a piece new to Manchester, and a reporter *is* called upon, a man is chosen who has been more or less free during the entire afternoon.

On the whole, while re-echoing thoroughly many of Mr. Ginaodh's sentiments, I must agree with Mr. Edgar Pemberton that the first-named gentleman's experiences have been unique. I have been connected with dramatic criticism in Lancashire—chiefly in Manchester—for a period of ten years, and I have never met that editor with such a terribly keen eye for theatrical advertisements and such an inordinate love for honeyed praise. Nor have I encountered the "revengeful heavy villain." I always deemed that gentleman the exclusive copyright of the inventive brain of the farcical-comedy writer. Nor, again, let me add, have I ever come across the agent-in-advance who had the temerity to offer to pay for a criticism he had himself concocted, or the one who fluttered free passes in the air as an indirect bribe. Such curiosities must be reserved for the delectation of smaller towns than it has yet been my lot to dwell in. Mr. Ginaodh, however, says he hies from "one of our most important pro-

vincial cities," though, of course, that is a rather large order. As for the "gooseberry champagne" business, it must surely be the sole patent of this important provincial city.

But, to return a moment. We, of course, have the agent-in-advance very fine and large. I have seen half a dozen of him every Friday for the last six years. He is certainly an objectionable person. He comes with reams of criticisms (which one never looks at) and a bag full of day bills and advertising novelties, which he doles out in dozens for fear you should run short. His main characteristics are assurance, and a beautiful, child-like lack of tact. He tells you all about the people you know best. He has even got preliminary "pars" of his own composition in his capacious pockets. These criticisms point out that *In the Ranks* is a military drama, that *Trilby* is adapted from Mr. du Maurier's famous novel, and that *Hamlet* is Shakspere's sublime tragedy. But, if a nuisance, the agent-in-advance is practically harmless; and, generally speaking, you don't harm him unless in a rash moment he begins to talk of himself. He is always fearfully and wonderfully polite, and if always on the verge of unconsciously offending you, he somehow never manages totally to succeed in doing so.

And now, in concluding these few *en passant* observations, let me ask that it be not for a moment imagined that my aim has been to cast doubt upon Mr. Ginaodh's statements. He has been badly treated somewhere, and his exposure of the state of affairs as he found them is a service alike to the journalistic and to the theatrical professions. I only wish to set down, as a working journalist acquainted with the doings behind the scenes in one or two of the largest cities out of London, that Mr. Ginaodh's experience has been widely different from mine. Criticism in the provinces has its shortcomings, but, on the whole, I consider that, in towns and cities where there is a public to appreciate it, it is sound, honest, painstaking, and able. We have no Hazlitts amongst us—though we have the nearest modern approach to him in Sir Edward Russell at Liverpool. But, on the other hand, we have no gentlemen who give themselves away religiously and regularly each Saturday, and often once and twice a week.

THE FUTURE OF STAGE DANCING.

By W. Davenport Adams.

WITHIN the last few weeks, the management of a London theatre has thought proper to introduce, as a feature of the entertainment offered, a quartette of French dancers, derived,

it is understood, from the Moulin Rouge. It would be interesting to know on what grounds this selection was made. It was, of course, assumed that the quartette would be an attraction; but for what reason? For the daring, the piquancy, of its performance? It is to be feared that those who looked for such qualities in this *pas de quatre* have looked in vain. The doings of these Frenchwomen may be absolved from all suspicion of naughtiness. What they may do at the Moulin Rouge I do not know; what they have done in London may have been ungraceful and unrefined; but it has also been dull. Why, then, have they been engaged? If they have exhibited neither piquancy nor grace, of what good were they? And why were English dancers not selected in their stead? Is it because English dancers are not competent, or are too few?

It may be useful to consider for a moment the present quality and range of English stage dancing. The subject is not beneath the consideration of the friends of the drama, because dancing must always form an element in certain departments of dramatic work, and, that being so, it is desirable that it should be capable and satisfactory. It is not to the interest of the stage that the lovers of good dancing should be obliged to go for it to the music-halls or the variety theatres. The saltatory art is a legitimate aid not only to pantomime and burlesque, but to musical farce, and even, on occasion, to the serious drama. There is a tarantelle, as everybody knows, in *A Doll's House*, and dancing is used to light up the dark spaces of Shaksperean tragedy. Stage dancing does not mean, of necessity, breakdowns and hornpipes; it is of much wider utility than that.

The condition and the future of English stage dancing are, then, matters of some importance; they cannot be matters of indifference. The question is, how do we stand in regard to them? Let us take a survey of the amount and kind of dancing presented, at the time of writing, at the London theatres. The largest measure of it appears to be supplied at the Avenue, where, in *Monte Carlo*, work of this kind is undertaken by the Sisters Belfry, Mr. Espinosa, Miss Emmie Owen, and Miss Ada Jenoure. Then, at the Shaftesbury, in *The Little Genius*, we have the labours in this direction of the Sisters Johnson, Miss Lillian Menelly, and Mr. E. J. Lonnen. At Daly's dancing is furnished by Miss Letty Lind and Mr. Huntley Wright; at the Gaiety, by Miss Kate Seymour and Mr. Leslie Holland; at the Garrick, by Miss Mabel Love and Little Tich; at the Court, by Miss Maud Wilmot and Mr. Nelstone; at the Duke of York's, by Miss Ada Reeve and Mr. Frank Wheeler; at the Prince of

Wales's, by Miss Kitty Loftus; and at the Savoy (when wanted) by Mr. Walter Passmore.

Now, to speak broadly and generally, the achievements of the artists named are excellent. Of Miss Letty Lind, of Miss Kate Seymour, and of Miss Mabel Love, I have already written in the pages of *The Theatre* (February, 1895). Miss Lind and Miss Seymour are as they were—unsurpassable in their respective spheres, the fanciful and the alert. Miss Love has been adding to her experience, and displays more lightness, more (apparent) spontaneity, than of yore, without quite satisfying the more exigent spectator; she is still at some distance from the perfection of ease and grace. That very vivacious lady, Miss Emmie Owen, gets at the Avenue opportunities which were not given to her at the Savoy, her sparkling method forming an instructive contrast to the more demure efforts of Miss Jenoure. Miss Menelly improves daily, and will probably develop into a skilful *danseuse*; she has evident aptitude for the work. Miss Maud Wilmot, if she shows no special improvement, is at least as careful and acceptable as she was at the Gaiety. Miss Ada Reeve has an enjoyable neatness of style, and Miss Kitty Loftus conveys the pleasing impression that she dances because she likes to do so. The method of the sisters Belfry and the sisters Johnson may be somewhat mechanical, may be too much according to rule, but it has the merit of being agile and spirited. Mr. Espinosa belongs to the school of the ballet as we see it at the Alhambra and the Empire; he turns himself too often into a teetotum, but his performance, if a little breathless, is admirably well-regulated and precise. Mr. Lonnen, Mr. Wright, Mr. Nelstone, Mr. Wheeler, Mr. Passmore, Mr. Holland, and Little Tich are dancers, more or less, of the eccentric—and assuredly of the humorous—type. Mr. Lonnen tends to the grotesque, and so does Mr. Nelstone; the others are more purely "legitimate" in their comicality.

But, of course, when I have named all the leading dancers at present before the London public, I have not necessarily named all that are (presumably) available. For example, Miss Phyllis Broughton, Miss Minnie St. Cyr, Miss Alice Lethbridge, Miss Florence Levey, Miss Maud Hill, Miss Topsy Sinden, Miss Lizzie Ruggles, Miss Brookes, Mr. Charles Danby, Mr. Fred Storey, Mr. Victor Stevens, Mr. Horace Mills, Mr. Seymour Hicks, Mr. Lionel Mackinder—all of these are well known to, and highly appreciated by, London playgoers, though they do not appear to be engaged (as I write) at any London theatre. Mr. Storey is at the

Alhambra, where, however, it is pantomime rather than dancing that is asked from him. The others are either "resting," or in the provinces, or in America. In the provinces also are male and female stage dancers (such as Miss Rosie Boote, Miss Jenny Owen, and so forth) of whom one reads appetizing descriptions, but who have yet to make themselves known in the metropolis.

Now, it will be observed that, so far as numbers and talent go, the London stage seems at first sight to be well served in the matter of dancing. One is obliged, however, to distinguish. Let us submit the above list of names to a brief analysis, and, to begin with, let us see how many of the performers named can be claimed as dancers and as dancers only. These are singularly, and regrettably, few. Miss Lind, incomparably our finest dancer, aspires to act and sing; so do Miss Broughton, Miss Owen, Miss Menelly, Miss Love, Miss Levey, Miss Hill, Miss Brookes, and the Sisters Belfry (who belong primarily to the "halls"). Miss Jenoure, Miss Reeve, Miss Loftus, are actresses and vocalists first, and only dancers when called upon. Messrs. Lonnen, Wright, Holland, Nelstone, Wheeler, Passmore, Danby, Stevens, Mills, Hicks, Mackinder, are comedians first and dancers afterwards. Miss Lizzie Ruggles promised at one time to rival Miss Lind in freshness and daintiness, "instead of which" she has taken to playing Trilby in the provinces.

What, then, is the result arrived at by this process of gradual elimination? Why, this—that the only London artists who are devoting themselves wholly, or in the first place, to the art of dancing are Miss Seymour, Miss Wilmot, Miss St. Cyr, Miss Lethbridge, Miss Sinden, the Sisters Johnson, Mr. Espinosa, and Mr. Storey. And this points obviously to the first necessity of the situation (if stage dancing is to flourish in our midst)—namely, that encouragement should be given to aspiring dancers to make dancing the chief business of their youth. As I have already said in these pages, the time comes when the dancer must needs retire from the field or take up some other branch of art. To that time it is prudent to look forward; and *danseuses* no longer in their prime may be pardoned if, on occasion, they make tentative efforts in the direction of acting, or singing, or both. Unhappily, most young women no sooner succeed as dancers than they long to "have a part" or "a song," and do not rest till they get them. Pressure is put upon the managers, who (usually) yield; then, of necessity, the best dancers being partly occupied in "acting" and "singing," most of the dancing is done by second-rate performers.

That there will always be a tolerably full supply of stage dancers may be taken for granted. The Drury Lane and other pantomimes, and the Alhambra and Empire ballets, are, in effect, schools from which issue, yearly, a large number of well-trained young persons, mostly (of course) of the female sex. These get drafted into the "halls" and the theatres, and out of their ranks issue in due course the *premières danseuses* of the future. Those, however, will never be numerous, so long as dancers of the first rank are allowed to gratify their ambition to be "actors" and "actresses." We shall be able to secure many a *pas de quatre* many a *pas de trois*, many a *pas de deux* on the stage, but the first-rate providers of *pas seuls* will be few indeed. It will be for the managers to resist the demand for "parts" as long as they can, and afterwards for the public and the Press to refuse to tolerate mediocre acting and singing simply because they are provided by persons who are first-rate dancers.

Another danger to the cause of stage dancing in England is the encouragement extended to "high-kicking." It is not so much that the public deliberately applauds that sort of thing as that it refrains too often from openly condemning it. I am glad to observe that in the musical farces recently submitted to London audiences the evil of "high-kicking" has no place, and I am inclined to hope that managers recognise the repugnance with which it is regarded by the great majority of playgoers. The thing is not indecent, in the ordinary sense of the word, for the attire of modern *danseuses* is sufficiently elaborate; the main objection to "high-kicking" is that it turns what should be dancing into the merest mechanical exertion. It is obviously without grace, it is obviously without science; it can be compassed by anybody who will give to it the requisite measure of time and patience. It is pure gymnastics, and could be produced more readily and effectually by a machine than by a human being. There is, in truth, only one thing (in so-called dancing) worse than "high-kicking," and that is the "splits," which are an aggravation of the "high-kicking" they usually accompany. How can we expect our young male and female dancers to aim at neatness, ingenuity, and grace, so long as playgoers, by their silence, give encouragement to the display, not of art, but of physical strength and endurance? The Press, perhaps, hardly likes to interfere actively where the audiences are lazily or cynically acquiescent; but managers by whom "high-kicking" and the "splits" are permitted may be assured that in the long run their policy will prove unwise. It is unquestionably detrimental to the pros-

perity of dancing, and I trust that before long it may be definitely abandoned.

KARAGHEUZ AND THE STAGE IN TURKEY.

By Richard Davey.

IN Ramazan, when the Mohammedans turn day into night and night into day; when, in the exquisite moonlight of the East, the enchantment of olden times reasserts itself, and envelops Stamboul with its weird romance; when the minarets and domes of the illuminated mosques stand out ghostly white against a deep blue sky, gemmed with myriad stars; when the quaint open shops in the narrow streets sparkle with coloured lamps, and groups of veiled women, guarded by eunuchs, each of whom bears a lantern fixed to a long pole, flit by mysteriously on their way to the mosque of Shazadeh or of Ahmed of the six minarets,—the two mosques most frequented by women—Karagheuz, the Turkish Punch, performs before rapturous audiences, who crowd the cafés (almost exclusively patronised by Moslems) behind the beautiful Bayezidiyeh Mosque, the loveliest of all the 360 Constantinople boasts.

Karagheuz is a far more important personage than most people would imagine; for though he be but a diminutive figure cut out of camel's hide and roughly painted, which plays its merry part behind a sheet, so that its comic outline and gorgeous colouring stand out against the white expanse, yet is he full of life and antics, a very epitome of Turkish wit and humour. In physical form he resembles our Punch, but in dress he approaches Pantaloon. He is, I believe, a very ancient mannikin. I am persuaded that long before the days of Mohammed the Conqueror, Karagheuz, under some other name, was an old and familiar friend in the houses of the wealthy Byzantines, and enjoyed wide popularity in the slums of ancient Constantinople.

My introduction to him was made in Ramazan, 1894, in an outlandish little café, established in a ruined Byzantine building immediately behind the great Bazaar, and close to the harem of the mosque of Bayezid. Shall I ever forget that night? When I shut my eyes the whole scene comes back to me—the long white-washed room, with a curved roof, which had probably formed part of the apse of a church or shrine, the line of lighted horn lanterns, hung up against the wall, and casting a dull glimmer on the faces of the strange crowd, seated in an improvised amphitheatre, for the performance invariably takes place in one corner of the chamber,

across which a sheet is tightly stretched. In the front seats, on time-worn armchairs, which had seen better days, in some Ambassador's palace perhaps, were a few elderly Pashas, one or two in uniform, the rest garbed in the hideous frock coat of modern civilisation, with fezzes on their heads. Their little bright-eyed children nestled close to them, watching the proceedings in that earnest yet half listless way peculiar to Turkish urchins. A few old turbaned Turks sat gravely apart, smoking their chibouks. The background was filled up, as usual, with a nondescript crowd of odds and ends, from every country of the earth, including several Cook's tourists in prosaic tweed suits, occasionally bursting into fits of ill-suppressed giggling, as Karagheuz, growing bolder and bolder with impunity and approbation, became more rampantly paganish than usual, in his glaring impropriety.

During the performance, tiny cups of aromatic coffee were constantly handed round by Circassian youths, wearing the good old costume—baggy trousers, and little coils of coloured linen, mere apologies for turbans, heaped up on their shaven heads. From time to time, through the open door, I caught a glimpse of the exquisite Gothic arcade and porphyry columns of the harem, or courtyard of the mosque, in which a kind of fair was in progress. Round the enormous cypress tree, which towers like a giant in the centre of the cloister, all sorts of dried fruits, oranges, dates, nuts, apples, sweetmeats, and rahat lakhoum were heaped up, under the guardianship of certain loud-voiced, bearded merchants, as picturesque as ever Deschamps and others painted. Beyond, the open portal of the mosque, flooded with the glare of a thousand lamps, revealed the interior of the sanctuary, and the bent forms of its devout congregation, rising up and falling again head to earth with rhythmic regularity each time the name of Allah was pronounced by the Imam. No words can paint the singularity of that contrast. Looking one way, my eyes rested on the stretched field of white canvas upon which Karagheuz was constantly violating the law of Allah and his Khoran; and when they wearied of watching his impish infamy, a turn of the head discovered that other scene of peace and prayer.

Suddenly the lights in the area of the improvised auditorium were extinguished, the sheet that was to serve for stage purposes shone opaquely transparent, and now the fun began in earnest. The orchestra—two drums, a flute, a viola, and a triangle—struck up those quavering sounds which enchant the Eastern ear, but which nearly drive the European listener mad. For a minute or two the transparency remained empty. Presently a funny little figure on a camel's back scurried across, speedily followed by

a cat running after a mouse. The cat played with the mouse an unconscionable time, and finally swallowed it whole. At this the orchestra emitted the most appalling noises, a sort of quivering shriek, intermingled with a rumbling rattle—possibly intended to illustrate the agonies of the luckless mouse in the torture chamber of the cat's stomach; then, with a deafening tattoo on the quaint-shaped drum, it gradually settled into silence. Pussy's digestion was evidently at rest. The incident of the cat and the mouse had so delighted the audience that a little wave of admiring whisper rippled through the chamber, to be presently silenced as the figures of two ladies were projected upon the screen. One was dressed in European and the other in Turkish fashion. They were apparently in earnest conversation, when suddenly they were joined by a Turkish "masher" in "Stambouline" or frock coat, with a straight collar, lavender trousers, patent leather boots, &c., *au grand couplet*. On his head he wore a fez; and a prodigious moustache, curling up under his nose, added a rakishness to his appearance that was irresistibly funny. Presently the masher pushed a slip of paper into Madame's hand, after which he made obvious overtures to elope with the Hanoum. For a few minutes all seemed rose-coloured; but Karagheuz was at hand, alas! ready to upset everything—bringing with him, on this his first appearance, the outraged husband of the lady. Then there was much animation upon the sheet. The husband and the lover fought right valiantly, the husband, I am sorry to say, continually getting the worst of it, much to the delight of the public. His fez flew off, his frock coat was torn, and, reduced at last to a pitiable plight, he was obliged to beat an ignominious retreat. Once more the Turkish lady, she of Europe, and the masher, were grouped together, and judging from the manner in which their hands met, and the earnest whispered consultation in which they apparently engaged, they were evidently plotting some fresh outrage against the offended husband. Nemesis, however, was at hand again in the shape of Karagheuz, who shortly returned, in company this time of his *alter ego* Hadji-aivat, of whom anon. Things now became very mixed indeed, for both these iniquitous little gentlemen having cast a longing glance upon the ladies' charms, determined forthwith to rid themselves of the inconvenient masher. When least that luckless youth expected it, they pounced upon him and literally pulled him in two. Then followed a scene with the fair ladies which I may not describe—not even in Latin.

Karagheuz is about eight inches high, and is always shown in profile. He is the best caricature imaginable of a fussy old Turk, with a parrot-like nose, and a beady glittering eye,

screened by a thick projecting eyebrow. This eye, as is often the case in certain Byzantine mosaics, notwithstanding that the figure is in profile, is shown full-faced, and surrounded by a thick black line which makes the china white of the ball uncannily vivid, and thus gives the diminutive countenance a quite devilish expression. His cone-shaped poll is surmounted by a huge turban which is removed by a wire on the slightest provocation, to display his cocoa-nut of a head, an exhibition always greeted with shouts of laughter. He wears a coloured waistcoat, a short jacket, and a pair of baggy trousers, with striped stockings exactly like those of our pantaloon. His legs and arms are flexible, and are moved by skilfully concealed wires. And his gestures are clumsy but vigorous enough. Karagheuz is invariably owned and worked by an Armenian; the Turks are not even equal to reciting their own jokes or pulling the wires of their own marionettes. He is not utterly alone in the world, for, as I have already mentioned, he has his friend Hadji-aivat by way of confidant. This little gentleman is twin brother to Harlequin. More alert in his movements than Karagheuz, he not unfrequently executes the abominations he suggests for the delectation of his master and crony.

An illustration of this occurred early in the play I am endeavouring to describe. When Karagheuz and Hadji-aivat, between them, had pulled the venturesome masher to pieces, the exertion consequent on this peculiar method of execution apparently proved too much for Karagheuz, who fell panting into a sitting position, in an acute angle of the sheet. Not so Hadji-aivat, for when the French Ambassador came upon the scene (whether by chance or design I never knew), he conducted himself abominably. On beholding his excellency, he fell prostrate at his feet, while Karagheuz limply rose and followed suit. The attitude of the Ambassador was exceedingly majestic as, addressing himself to one of his secretaries, who now slid on to the canvas, he lifted his stick menacingly. On this the two ladies rushed forward, apparently to beseech his protection. The Ambassador received them affably enough and offered each an arm—doubtless with the object of escorting them safely to the Embassy. On this Hadji-aivat, who had got behind his excellency, suddenly jumped upon his back. In an instant his gold-laced coat was in tatters, his cocked hat cast to the winds, and the representative of the *Grande République* now appeared a very poor thin wretched individual indeed, stricken with rheumatism and seemingly afflicted with the gout. Howling with pain, he rushed off, followed by his fair friends, whilst the orchestra struck a few chords vaguely recalling the Marseillaise. Karagheuz,

evidently afraid of the consequences, promptly bolted, leaving Hadji-aivat triumphant master of the field. What became of the ladies is more than I can say.

Next we saw a caravan bound for Mecca, mounted on camels, even on elephants, the little beasts being by no means badly constructed. The elephants caused intense merriment, for, with their long trunks, they helped to undress a goodly number of people, and otherwise facilitated the pranks of Karagheuz and Hadji-aivat, to whom the undressing of ladies and gentlemen in public apparently offers peculiar attractions.

All this time the Armenian behind the screen, in a sing-song voice, recited a dialogue in Turkish, full of preposterous double meanings and questionable "chestnuts." Occasionally, to the accompaniment of the little orchestra, he sang a few verses in those quivering nasal tones which Orientals admire as much as we Europeans the roulades of a Patti. Alas! I must not translate the verses for your benefit—if I did, this page would surely never be published; nor dare I whisper into your ear even a single specimen of the *bon-mots* which excited such Homeric laughter in the audience of the little café behind the Bayezideh; nor yet may I enter into further particulars of the exploits of Karagheuz, or describe in detail how he and his friend, Hadji-aivat divested themselves of their last scrap of reticence, and, like a pair of little drunken Satyrs, careered madly up and down the key-board of equivocal conduct, thereby provoking roars of delight from the curiously mixed audience.

So on and on went Karagheuz and his friend, leaving no iniquity untried, until, in an evil moment for himself, the old sinner tumbled, like Humpty Dumpty, off a high wall, and could not be picked up again. Then they buried him, Turkish fashion, hurrying him to his grave as fast as they could; but Karagheuz, who is immortal, presently pushed up the lid of the coffin and sat upon it, screaming with laughter, to the intense amusement of the public, who applauded till their hands ached and bestowed liberal doles of small coin on the two handsome lads who came round with a pewter platter to collect their offerings. The light behind the screen disappeared as suddenly as it had shone out, and the outrageous little orchestra played a *crescendo* finale, winding up with a prolonged shriek intended to inform us, so I conceive, that Satan had ended by securing the little Turkish Don Juan and his Leperello for all eternity.

We drank a parting cup of coffee, and the Armenian manager came from behind his screen to be introduced to the strangers, and receive the compliments of the more distinguished among the audience. Then the company poured out into the street and

joined the crowd in the court-yard of the beautiful mosque, not a few of them, I noticed, entering the building for evening prayer.

SIGNOR ARDITI'S REMINISCENCES.

By a Musical Critic.

SIGNOR ARDITI, who has lately published his memoirs (edited with marked skill and good taste by the Baroness von Zedlitz), has undoubtedly put us in touch with the greatest artists of the century, living and dead. His life, which has been rife with adventure and enterprise, is recorded in a simple, unostentatious manner, and if, to quote a few lines from the introduction penned by the Baroness, "it has been impossible to recount his reminiscences in his own graceful and plastic vernacular, by reason of an English rendering of a typical Italian's verbal utterances," we are now and then able to catch a gleam of the maestro's individuality, notwithstanding "the many difficulties inevitably inherent to the translator's task."

As his first London manager, Benjamin Lumley, wrote of him thirty years ago, an abler conductor has never existed here than Signor Arditi. He stands to-day almost the last of a remarkable group of operatic conductors who, although not born on our soil, have devoted their energies to the cultivation of first-class music in England. Arditi pursued his career earnestly and unflinchingly, and having reaped the benefit of a busy and honourable calling, had the privilege not only of meeting a great many celebrities in his time, but of coming in daily contact with them.

There are few great artists who have not sung or played under the bâton of the popular conductor of Italian Opera. During this century, which has indeed been a musically fruitful one, Signor Arditi has lent many a helping hand to beginners who have since become famous in their art. He tells us of his meeting with Madame Patti, who, as a tiny girl, sang the rondo of an opera so divinely that he and his friend Bottesini "wept genuine tears of emotion on hearing the extraordinary vocal power and beauty of which little Adelina was, at that tender age, possessed." Madame Nilsson used to practise with Signor Arditi when she first came to London, and he tells many a good story about her in his reminiscences. She was a more than usually nervous singer, and it was a standing joke among her dressmakers not to put too much *passementerie* on the fronts of her skirts, as she was sure to tear them to atoms when singing. This is his description of her as she appeared to him in the early days:—"Everything was in favour of the young Swedish artist.

—her youthful freshness, in itself a priceless charm; a definite individuality; her slight, supple figure, which lent itself to the draping of any classical robe; and, above all, the voice, of extensive compass, mellow, sweet, and rich."

The composer of "Il Bacio," the song which made Signor Arditi's reputation all over the world, has much to say about Mario and Grisi. Grisi, who adored her husband, was fearfully jealous of his success with other women, and used to suffer tortures whenever a certain lady took her seat in her solitary box at the Opera. One day she could not contain her anger any longer, and ran to Signor Arditi to pour her troubles into his ears. He laughed at her, and said: "Surely *you* have no cause to be jealous of such a plain, unattractive person?" To make a long story short, a Miss Giles, an unmarried lady of an uncertain age, and far from being in possession of an agreeable presence, was a constant attendant at the Opera whenever Mario was announced to sing. She even went so far, on one occasion, as to follow him from England to Italy, and thence to Russia, much to the righteous indignation of Grisi. Mario was, however, impervious to her flattering attentions, for he was devoted to his wife, and thus, while Grisi was eating out her heart in a passionate attack of jealousy, Mario shrugged his shoulders indifferently, and when referring to his ardent follower, spoke of her as "*Cette vieille folle Anglaise.*"

We seldom hear of a really amiable, serenely-tempered prima donna nowadays, when singers are reputed to consist of a bundle of nerves, and it is nice to read of Alboni, who, so Signor Arditi tells us, was really a veritable embodiment of inimitable good nature and affability. She never allowed anything to put her out of temper, and invariably took the brightest view of the worries that fell to her share. Alboni had her likes and dislikes, however, and she very much disliked wigs. A bad attack of typhoid fever had, in his early days, deprived Signor Arditi of the few hairs he could lay claim to. He has been bald ever since he was out of his teens. So he bethought himself of wearing a wig. Why not? Of course, the very thing. But he had not consulted Alboni on the subject, and discovered, when it was too late, that she would not allow her conductor to stand before her the whole evening with a wig on for a prince's ransom. What happened? She entered the artists' room one evening where the musicians were tuning up, and asked for the maestro. He appeared before her in all the glory of his new wig. She stood looking at him for a moment, and then burst into an uncontrollable fit of laughter. "Gracious, Arditi," she exclaimed, "*you* with that wig? Never! Why, my dear friend, I couldn't have

sung with *that* before me—so here goes!" and with one bound she clutched at his unfortunate *toupée* and tore it from his head. Signor Arditi never tried to wear another wig in public, although he used to try it on in the privacy of his chamber, and wonder why the pleasure of wearing it had been denied to him. In after years his wife told him that he had clung to it with curious persistence, since it was the first object that revealed itself to her when she unpacked his portmanteau for the first time after their marriage.

Since that moment Signor Arditi's baldness has become his chief personal characteristic. To illustrate the fact, he gives an account of a droll experience in America. He was in receipt of a cheque from Mr. Mapleson, and drove to the bank to cash it. On the cheque being presented, the clerk asked whether anyone could identify him. He laughingly said, "I am Signor Arditi." The clerk was none the wiser. Then a happy thought struck the maestro. "Do you ever go to the Opera?" he asked of the clerk. "Yes, often," was the reply. Whereupon Signor Arditi turned his back and raised his hat, disclosing his bald head. A broad grin overspread the face of the clerk. "Oh, yes, sir," he replied, "now I know who you are. It's all right."

As with most artists, Signor Arditi's career has been somewhat chequered at times, but his talent and his cheerful disposition have always helped him to bear his troubles complacently. Moreover, his wife, who has accompanied him everywhere, and has been his constant companion through "rain and shine," figures brightly throughout the reminiscences, and it is easy to see that she has always been his guiding star and adviser in matters requiring shrewd discernment. Now, as much as ever, he is wont to turn to "Virginia" for counsel, and he will shake his head, while a smile spreads over the kindly, genial face, and he tells his friends in broken vernacular: "Oh, my wife, she know everyding."

And so it happens that in the autumn of his life Signor Arditi has jotted down the chief incidents of interest which occurred to him. His meetings with great men, such as Rossini, Gounod, Garibaldi, Guiglini, are pleasantly described, while his many stories of Patti, Titiens, Grisi, Nilsson, and a host of other stars of the lyric stage are well worth reading. It is touching and characteristic of the maestro's amiability and kindly nature that his chum of yore and companion of his boyhood's days, Bottesini, is so affectionately referred to throughout his work; it is, moreover, a proof that "once a friend always a friend" may be added to the list of good qualities we have learnt to appreciate in this ambitious yet withal modest musician.

It were impossible to quote as many of the entertaining stories that lend interest to these reminiscences as one would like. To music lovers, old and young, the book should prove diverting, since, to those who are fortunate enough to be able to look back to the palmy days of yore at Her Majesty's, they will be able to recall many a bright hour, whereas the younger generation may become acquainted with the past of those particular stars, now gone, who shone out so prominently in the operatic firmament.

DRAMATIC LIKENESSES.

By Edward J. Goodman.

WHENCE comes that craze, that mania, for it is nothing less, which impels certain critics, both in private and in public, to seek out and point out every real or fancied resemblance existing, or supposed to exist, between the plots, the situations, the incidents, the characters of our modern plays and those of other dramas? How often one meets some eager sage bursting with the discovery he has made that such and such a thing is "like" something else! What a gleam of triumph there is in his eyes, what a look of wisdom in his face, what an air of smug self-satisfaction pervades his whole being! Probably Newton, when he discovered the law of gravitation, or Harvey when he lighted upon the circulation of the blood, took the matter far more coolly than does little Quid Nunc when he has just found out that there is a river in Macedon and a river in Monmouth, and an initial M in both. The revelation of his "find" is a cheap and easy mode of gaining credit for knowledge and astuteness, and I fancy that his disclosure is the fruit rather of vanity than of vigilance.

This tracing of resemblances often rests upon a very slender basis, and the likeness would in many cases have escaped the attention of even the most experienced playgoer. When notice is drawn to it, of course it excites a certain amount of wonder, but it has frequently a more mischievous effect. It brands the unhappy author, possibly, with the undeserved stigma of plagiarism, and in any case robs him of his claim to originality. The consequence is that many people are deterred from going to see a play by the belief that they have seen it before or that it is not new. The gloss, the charm, of novelty is swept from the work, and a prejudice is excited against it as a piece of second-hand goods. How unfair, how unjust this is to the author it would be easy to demonstrate. Of course, the first thing that

naturally occurs to one is the old saying that "there is nothing new under the sun." In art it is almost impossible to create something absolutely new. Fresh and spontaneous as the idea may be, it will be strange if some Dryasdust, by diligent grubbing among the relics of the past, does not manage to root out some slight resemblance in a matter of detail to another idea that has been developed in the bygone. But even so the question is, what of it? In what way does it impair the value of the work, if that work be a good one in itself, and why spoil its interest by destroying its freshness?

I am not, of course, referring to cases of barefaced and deliberate plagiarism. It is right that these should be discovered and exposed like all other acts of dishonesty. I do not share the cynical indifference of those who contend that it does not matter how an author came by his wares; I have no sympathy with the Autolycus who snaps up "unconsidered trifles" and more than trifles. The man who steals a plot is as much a thief as he who steals a purse, and I rejoice when any one discovers that a certain play produced as "new and original" has been "taken from the French" or any other source. In my opinion, the duty of every playwright who "borrows" is to make it known honestly and frankly that he derived his materials from the work of other men, and base his claim to praise solely on his skill as an adapter—a faculty of no mean value. There are authors who have gone even to extremes of conscientiousness in this direction. It is not every one who would have had the candour of the first Lord Lytton to acknowledge that the famous boudoir scene in *Money* was founded on a little forgotten charade, or, going further still, to admit that Graves' small joke that "if he had been bred a hatter little boys would have been born without heads" was not his own.

No, I confine my attention exclusively to the resemblance arising from mere coincidence, and contend that over this a merciful veil should be drawn. None but those who have been engaged in original work, deriving their ideas from the inspiration or the labour of their brains, can form any conception of the freaks that fate performs in this way. The strangest "doubles" are frequently created unwittingly by men separated by wide distances and long intervals of time, and when these come into collision they produce a thunder-clap of wonder. Many a reader of these lines will realise what I mean, many a writer will remember the bitter annoyance and disappointment he has felt at finding, even without the aid of Quid Nunc, that what he has done has been "done before." But, as I have said,

what of it? It is hardly possible that any two men dealing with the same subject will, if they work quite independently, deal with it in the same way. The air may be identical in both cases, but it may be played with infinite variations, and with pleasure to those who have heard both compositions. I am not going to emulate the example of those critics whose policy I deprecate, but one or two instances to the point may be useful. In what way is the merit of *Caste* affected by the fact that the scene in which the news of George d'Alroy's safety is broken to his supposed widow is very like indeed to a similar one in *La Joie fait Peur?* Or, again, take the case of *The Honeymoon* and *The Lady of Lyons*, where the circumstances in which the heroes marry, different though they are, have still so much in common. These are great plays, strong plays, and will bear comparison with even their famous prototypes. No demonstration of their likeness to any other will affect them, any more than the majority of Shakspere's are affected by the fact that he borrowed his plots from the novels and dramas of other writers.

It is different in the case of the slighter and more sensitive work of our contemporaries. A breath may ruin their charm, a blot of indiscreet truth may stain their purity. It may not always be easy to distinguish between coincidence and plagiarism, but except in cases—and there have been such cases—in which incidents, situations, and whole stories have been impudently appropriated, why not give the poor author the benefit of the doubt and be charitably silent? An accidental, wholly undesigned, resemblance is the commonest thing in the world. I suffered from such a thing once myself—to cite a single instance out of thousands—not in a play, but in a story. I conceived the idea of a tale turning upon what I thought to be a novel dramatic situation. I worked it out and sent my MS. to a well-known publisher. His reply was gratifying up to a certain point, but he said my whole plot was identical with that of a certain famous writer in a novel which he had recently published, and of which he sent me a copy. It was so. Marvellous to relate, the main situations in the two stories were absolutely the same, the only difference being that certain acts were done in my rival's book by a woman and in mine by a man. Hesitating as to what course I should take in these circumstances, I referred the matter to a high literary authority, and his advice was to publish my story, but give it a preface pointing out the accidental coincidence. I took this advice, and the result was disastrous. The novel was an utter failure, and this was attributed by my publisher to the disclosure of the fact that my subject was not new.

Afterwards I received a letter of sympathy from a well-known writer, who gave me examples of coincidences within his own experience which seemed perfectly astounding. So I think the less said about such things the better.

There is another point of view from which this subject is to be regarded. I have said that these accidental likenesses in plot and so forth signify little or nothing. Let it be borne in mind that in certain departments of the drama the public positively prefer something old, something they are accustomed to, to something newer and more unfamiliar. Take our melodramas for instance—there is a class of such works in which audiences will hardly tolerate anything but a certain stereotyped set of characters and incidents which, it would almost seem, cannot be worn out by time and repetition. The gentlemanly and the ruffianly villain, the heroine in distress, the falsely accused hero, the virtuous comic man, the conspiracy, the rescue, the trial, and the proof of innocence by document or otherwise—the public will have it all and nothing else. There is at this moment a drama running successfully at one of our greatest theatres in which there is hardly a scene or a character which is new, and yet how it "goes!" The want of originality in this piece is transparent to the least experienced eye; it is naked and unashamed, yet the piece is none the worse for that. So, sapient Mr. Quid Nunc, bear this in mind when you are about to make your startling revelations. The likeness of one play to another is of little consequence when the piece is a good one. Let it stand on its own merits, and, as far as the question of its originality is concerned, let it alone.

A NOTE ON *CYMBELINE*.

By the Editor.

NOTHING could be more reassuring as to the future of the romantic drama and of the player's art than the singular success of *Cymbeline* at the Lyceum. The Iachimo of Sir Henry Irving and the Imogen of Miss Ellen Terry have been accepted on all sides as impersonations to be remembered with lasting delight and interest, and the beauty of the performance in general has obtained no less wide a recognition. It is well to recollect that this triumph has been won in the teeth of grave dramatic defects. *Cymbeline*, as we said in our last issue but one,

SIR HENRY IRVING & MISS ELLEN TERRY in "CYMBELINE."

has a marked looseness of construction. Two of the three chief personages in the piece are seldom before the audience. We have already quoted a remark made by a dramatic expert at the first night of the Lyceum revival:—"A well-made play? No; Haddon Chambers at his worst." "The revival," writes one who knows what he is talking about, "is gracefully done; but parts of the play itself are, if one may whisper it, stupid." Without going quite so far as this, we must admit that the work bears marks of extremely hasty composition. Is it not probable that Shakspere wrote it at short notice for some special occasion, intending to recast it at leisure? Be this as it may, the deficiencies of the piece are more than counterbalanced by the presence in it of such a character as Imogen, in which the genius of the dramatist for the portraiture of engaging womanhood is shown to the full, and which loses none of its beauty in the hands of Miss Ellen Terry. Two scenes of the revival are illustrated in our present issue, both by Mr. Archibald Chasemore.

Portrait.

MR. W. L. ABINGDON.

IT would be difficult to speak of Mr. Abingdon according to his deserts without incurring the risks of an action for libel. Yet no one with the slightest respect for truth would be hardy enough to deny that since Mr. Willard returned to the paths of theatrical virtue, exchanging the Spiders and Dugdales for the Blenkarns and Judahs and Goodwillies, the stage has known any such thorough-paced scoundrel as the young actor whose portrait we here offer to our readers. He absolutely revels in scoundrelism—malignant, astute, wary, polished, cold-blooded scoundrelism. However much it may deplore the fact, Towcester, in Northamptonshire, was the place in which this monster of iniquity first saw the light. There, almost under the shadow of a fine old church, he received an education sufficiently liberal to inspire a hope that the inherent evil in his nature would be kept within due bounds as he came to manhood. But this was not to be, although the evil was checked for a time by the hard work incident to a clerkship in a local bank. In or about 1880, at the age of twenty, he went on the stage, beginning at Belfast. Five years afterwards he obtained a footing in London, and from 1888 to the present time has been mixed up—chiefly at the Adelphi—with villainy of the deepest conceivable dye. The righteous indignation of the playgoing public over his malpractices did not prevent them from admiring his Robert Stilewood in *Hands Across the Sea*, Captain Macdonald in *The English Rose*, and James Dixon in *The Fatal Card*. Especially noteworthy, if hardly worth the pains he bestowed upon the part, was his Laurent in *Thérèse Raquin*. On the whole, it has been Mr. Abingdon's usual fate on the London stage to be reviled by the heroine, vanquished by the hero, and finally led away to death or penal servitude midst the mingled plaudits and execrations of the pit and gallery. Possibly the execrations may be more flattering to his pride than the plaudits, which are rightly extorted by an artistic method, a strong grasp of character, and a keen perception of stage effect. Off the stage, it should be added, his villainy is so successfully masked that he makes many friends. That he will soon rise above the somewhat narrow groove to which he has generally been confined, is more than probable. He has no ordinary talents for light comedy and the romantic, and may be trusted to prove as much when a good opportunity presents itself.

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MR. W. L. ABINGDON.

At the Play.

IN LONDON.

INCLEMENT weather during the past month had a distinctly depressing effect upon the theatres, save in the case of those exceptionally favoured, where the attendance has shown no appreciable falling off. Nor can it reasonably be expected that any material improvement will be experienced until Christmas brings its crowd of eager holiday-makers.

UNDER THE RED ROBE.

A Romantic Play, in Four Acts, adapted by EDWARD ROSE from the novel by STANLEY WEYMAN. Produced at the Haymarket Theatre, October 17.

Gil de Berault	Mr. HERBERT WARING
Richelieu	Mr. SYDNEY VALENTINE
Henri de Cocheforêt	Mr. HAMILTON REVELLE
Marquis de Pombal ..	.. Mr. J. L. MACKAY
De Fargis	Mr. ALBERT MAYER
Captain Larolle ..	.. Mr. CYRIL MAUDE
Lieutenant	Mr. BERNARD GOULD
Sir Thomas Brunt ..	Mr. DAWSON MILWARD
Clon	Mr. E. HOLMAN CLARK
Louis	.. Mr. CLARENCE BLAKISTON
Sergeant	Mr. RUPERT LISTER
Malpas	.. Mr. CECIL HOPE
Renée de Cocheforêt	Miss WINIFRED EMERY
Madame de Cocheforêt	.. Miss EVA MOORE
Madame Zaton ..	Miss FANNY COLEMAN
Suzette	.. Miss HALKETT
Waitress	Miss ANNIE SAKER

Mr. Stanley Weyman's story has achieved in book form sufficient popularity to render any but the barest reference to the plot unnecessary. All that need be said, therefore, on the point is that a certain soldier of fortune, Gil de Berault, undertakes, at the instigation of Richelieu, and as the price of his life, to proceed from Paris to Cocheforêt in the Pyrenees, there to discover and arrest the owner of the Château, Henri de Cocheforêt, and bring him back to be dealt with as a rebel to the king. But having reached his destination, Gil finds himself face to face with Renée, Henri's sister, of whom he instantly becomes enamoured. It then becomes for him a question whether he shall betray the woman he loves or the man he has sworn to serve. Finally he chooses the former course, and giving Henri his freedom returns to Paris prepared to accept death at the hands of the great Cardinal. Renée, however, precedes him thither, and by her intercession prevails upon Richelieu to pardon the apparent

culprit, who is only too glad to join his fortunes with hers for the future.

In adapting the novel for the stage Mr. Edward Rose has displayed great dexterity. He has succeeded in producing a play which, merely in point of stage-craft, takes much higher rank than *The Prisoner of Zenda*. Occasionally he has allowed himself to become a little confused in the marshalling of his incidents, but as a whole the drama is a well-knit, coherent, and exceedingly effective piece of work. Fortunately he has had to deal with a really thrilling tale, of which human emotion is one of the chief features. At first glance the character of Gil appears to be something very nearly approaching to a mass of contradictions, and even Mr. Rose has not succeeded in wholly reconciling the conflicting elements in his nature. But where the author has failed, or at any rate stumbled, the actor has shown himself ready to rush to the rescue. Nothing finer of its kind has been seen for many a day than Mr. Herbert Waring's superb impersonation of Gil. With marvellous cleverness Mr. Waring indicates the various features of the character—on the one hand the boastfulness, the devil-may-care courage, the swagger and the lustfulness of the braggadocio; on the other the large-heartedness, the sincerity and loyalty of the man who becomes a changed being beneath the inspiring influence of a good woman's love. Mr. Waring has waited long for his chance, but now that it has reached him he shows how ready and how thoroughly well-equipped he is to make the most of it. Beside him the other characters are of comparatively slight importance. From first to last Gil dominates the play—in him the chief interest is centred. Luckily, Mr. Waring is well able to bear the burden thus placed upon him, and to carry the piece to a successful termination. The part of Renée, the heroine, barely affords Miss Winifred Emery fair scope for her powers. She contrives, notwithstanding, to invest it with much tender and womanly feeling. One cannot but perceive, however, that Miss Emery is acquiring a habit of, if we may be allowed the expression, "pumping up" her emotion, which is fatal to anything like artistic accomplishment. Mr. Cyril Maude supplies the comedy — the weakest feature of the piece—and we are sorrowfully bound to declare that the expression of broad humour is obviously not Mr. Maude's strongest point. Miss Eva Moore astonished even her warmest admirers by an extraordinarily fine outburst of emotion, and Mr. Bernard Gould scored heavily as a stubborn, surly, but straightforward Lieutenant. The cast, in short, was generally excellent, while the mounting of the piece afforded constant evidence of the taste and care which the new managers of the Haymarket,

Mr. Frederick Harrison and Mr. Cyril Maude, have determined to expend upon their productions.

Two Little Vagabonds.

An Original Melodrama, from *Les Deux Gosses*, by M. Pierre Decourcelle, in Five Acts, by Geo. R. Sims and Arthur Shirley. Produced at the Princess's Theatre, September 23.

George Thornton ..	Mr. Ernest Leicester	Job Gargoyle	Mr. F. Lloyd
Captain Darville	Mr. Lyston Lyle	Whiffin..	Mr. Thomas Kean
John Scarth	Mr. Walter Howard	Marion Thornton ..	Miss Geraldine Olliffe
Bill Mullins	Mr. Edmund Gurney	Barbara Scarth ..	Miss Mena le Bert
Dido Bunce	Mr. Chris Walker	Sister Randall	Miss Eva Williams
The "Cough Drop"	Mr. Edward W. Coleman	Maidservant	Miss Dorothy Campbell
Leeson	Mr. Herbert Vyvyan	Biddy Mullins	Miss Marie Foley
Hargitt	Mr. Gerald Kennedy	Wally	Miss Sydney Fairbrother
Dr. Lynn	Mr. C. Astley	Dick	Miss Kate Tyndall

For some reason, which it is not very easy to understand, the adapters of M. Pierre Decourcelle's *Les Deux Gosses* describe their version as "a new and original melodrama." Although somewhat in the nature of a novel departure, the proceeding must not be considered to detract from the praise due to them for their clever manipulation of the material placed at their disposal. That they have made quite the best use of it we are hardly prepared to say. So full of dramatic opportunities is the story, one cannot help feeling again and again that Messrs. Sims and Shirley have failed to profit as they might have done by the chances afforded them. It is conceivable, moreover, that, by the exercise of a little ingenuity, the entire piece might have been set upon a higher plane, that, in short, in place of pure melodrama the adapters could have given us a really first-class drama suitable for any west-end theatre. That they have preferred the humbler course of catering for the tastes of the Princess's patrons is perhaps, from their standpoint at least, scarcely a subject for regret. A good stirring melodrama, charged with human emotion and furnished with well-contrasted characters, is always welcome. Such *Two Little Vagabonds* deservedly claims to be, and its instant success will not, consequently, surprise anyone. The first act, purely explanatory, is, it is true, disfigured by a number of improbabilities and a lack of dramatic perspicuity which the authors ought to have seen their way to avoid. But, this excepted, there is little or no room for complaint regarding their adaptation. The sketches of low life are, of course, marked by an accuracy of observation and fidelity to nature characteristic of Mr. Sims's work, while the humour, if hardly so plentiful as might be expected, is sufficiently good of its kind. But when all is said and done, the chief honours must be awarded to M. Decourcelle for his ability in originating a tale at once so thrilling and so strongly pathetic.

Let us briefly indicate its salient features. In consequence of a bitter quarrel between George Thornton and his wife, the former hands their child over to the care of an itinerant burglar, who

brings the lad up with another, of whom also he has charge. The two lads, Dick and Wally, become devoted to each other; the first, who is a robust little urchin, acting as protector to his sickly companion. Eventually Dick, tired of constant ill-usage, runs away, and when, later, Thornton and his wife claim their boy, it is Wally who is presented to them by the conscienceless burglar. The fraud is, however, speedily discovered, but at Dick's solicitation Mrs. Thornton consents to be a mother to both boys. Previously Thornton had harboured suspicions of his wife's virtue, and in order that her innocence may be established, certain letters, of which Bill Mullins, the showman, retains possession, are required. To obtain them Thornton ventures into the thieves' den, is there bound, gagged, and robbed, and laid upon a trussel bed. Dick, however, has set forth on a similar quest, and finding his father thus maltreated, releases him, and together they escape through the skylight window just as the ruffians, temporarily absent, force their way into the place. A hot pursuit follows. Dick and his father find themselves on the bank of a canal, which they cross. But Bill Mullins and his comrades, as it happens, are close at hand. By opening the sluice gates, Dick, however, contrives to bar their further progress, while Mullins is precipitated into the water beneath. The piece concludes with the death of Wally and the reinstatement of Dick in his father's house. An admirable performance contributed to the success of the play. Mr. Ernest Leicester's recent progress affords an excellent illustration of what hard work and thought will do for an artist. His method has become more polished, and with no deficiency of power he reveals a self-restraint that is highly laudable. Mr. Edmund Gurney's Bill Mullins was a fine bit of character drawing; Miss Geraldine Olliffe, who has still to rid herself of some awkward mannerisms, must be credited with a considerable measure of emotional force, while Miss Mena Le Bert and Miss Eva Williams rendered valuable service. Of the boys' parts Wally's is much the more difficult and Dick's the more showy. It is greatly to Miss Sydney Fairbrother's credit, therefore, that in the former character she fully shared the honours showered upon, and thoroughly merited by, both exponents of the Two Little Vagabonds.

Mr. Martin.

A Play, in Three Acts, by Charles Hawtrey. Produced at the Comedy Theatre, October 3.

Sir Charles Sinclair .. Mr. Henry Kemble	Footman.. .. .. .. Mr. Stephenson
Harry Sinclair.. .. ..Mr. W. T. Lovell	Mona Carew .. .. Miss Jessie Bateman
Martin Heathcote .. Mr. Charles Hawtrey	Hon. Mrs. George Bamfylde
George S. Martin Mr. Charles Brookfield	Miss Marjorie Griffiths
Hon. George Bamfylde Mr. Frederick Volpe	Tiny Merridew.. .. Miss Nina Boucicault
Algy Pakenham .. Mr. Alfred Matthews	Sophia O'Flanagan .. Miss Rose Leclercq
Mr. Kilfoyle .. Mr. William F. Hawtrey	Maudie Vavasour .. Miss Lottie Venne
Watkins . .. . Mr. H. Deane	

It is to be feared that Mr. Hawtrey is scarcely destined to set

the Thames on fire in his capacity as dramatist. *Mr. Martin*, his new play, is not, we readily admit, without certain good qualities, but as a whole it is sadly wanting in balance, sustained interest, and, curiously enough, the technical skill which one might have expected to find in an actor of Mr. Hawtrey's experience. The story, also, is decidedly thin, and of that hybrid description which is everything by turns and nothing long. Nor is probability its strong point. A young fellow named Sinclair becomes involved with a music-hall artist named Maudie Vavasour, whom, as a point of honour, he insists upon marrying. His friend Martin Heathcote consequently runs down into the country to obtain the necessary means from Sinclair's uncle to buy Maudie off. He is there mistaken for a Mr. Martin, an American, to whom the old man has been advised to entrust £1000 by way of an investment. In the end Mr. Martin proves to be the husband, long believed to be dead, of Miss Vavasour, and the way is thus left open to Sinclair to espouse his cousin, Mona Carew. From this sketch it may be judged that Mr. Hawtrey's story is hardly of a kind to carry conviction with it, while the dialogue, if occasionally smart, is only too frequently disfigured by an air of effort. The author has fitted himself fairly well in the part of Heathcote, but he unfortunately handicapped his endeavours on the first night by an attempt to imitate a gentleman well known in society. As Maudie Vavasour Miss Lottie Venne was excellent in the comedy passages, but failed to give anything like real effect to the pathetic side of the character. The success of the evening was achieved by Miss Nina Boucicault, whose portrait of Tiny Merridew was as clever and effective a piece of acting as one could desire to have. Mr. C. H. E. Brookfield, too, scored heavily as the rascally American, while the minor characters were all admirably played. In front of *Mr. Martin* was performed *A White Stocking*, an exceedingly pleasing little comedy by Mr. Edward Ferris and Mr. Arthur Stuart, in which Messrs. W. F. Hawtrey, G. Hippisley, H. Deane, and Miss Elliot-Page created an excellent impression.

Mr. John Hare as Eccles.

On Friday, October 16, Mr. John Hare appeared for the first time before a London audience at the Grand, Islington, in the character of Eccles. To have seen *Caste*, even if it be only once, is to have the recollection of T. W. Robertson's masterpiece indelibly stamped on the memory. Story, characters, and dialogue linger with equal vividness in the remembrance. In sad circumstances, first impressions must always exert a hold

over the imagination to which later cases can seldom or never pretend. For Mr. Hare to venture upon a new rendering of Eccles was, therefore, a step of considerable boldness. George Honey and David James, Henry Kemble and G. W. Anson have each in turn given us a conception of the part, and in every case the reading, certain details excepted, has been substantially the same. Mr. Hare alone takes a widely divergent view of the character, a view, moreover, which is authoritatively claimed to be that of Robertson himself. Personally we are not at all sure that an author is invariably the best judge of all the possibilities lurking within the folds of his own exertion. But of one thing we are quite certain, namely, that if Mr. Hare's performance, despite its wonderful qualities, its humour, and its pathos, was Robertson's idea of the part, then Robertson owed far more to his early interpreters than people ever imagined. To attempt to whitewash Eccles, to read into his character a redeeming grace it could not consistently possess, to endow him with a potential although suppressed instinct for higher things, is in our judgment an entirely mistaken proceeding. While, therefore, we are quite prepared to acknowledge the great ability, the marvellous technical skill and undoubted cleverness shown in his impersonation by Mr. Hare, an artist who can do nothing ill, we are constrained distinctly to differ from him on the question of its fundamental accuracy.

The White Silk Dress.

A Musical Farce, in Two Acts. Words and Lyrics by H. J. W. Dam. Music by A. McLean and R. Somerville. Produced at the Prince of Wales's Theatre, October 3.

Jack Hammersley ..	Mr. Arthur Roberts	Office Boy	.. Master Rignold
Sir James Turner ..	.. Mr. Eric Thorne	Mary Turner	Miss Decima Moore
Lord Macready ..	.. Mr. E. H. Kelly	Mrs. Pennington ..	.. Miss Ellas Dee
Major Penyon ..	Mr. J. Furneaux Cook	Lady Turner	.. Miss Singleton
Professor Beasley ..	Mr. Walter Uridge	A Lady from Algiers	.. Mrs. E. H. Brooke
Charles Hammersley	.. Mr. Harold Eden	Miss Talbot	Miss Eva Ellerslie
Angus McWhirter ..	Mr. George Traill	Miss Essex	.. Miss Pierrette Amella
Skinderson	.. Mr. W. Cheesman	Edith Hammersley ..	Miss Carrie Benton
Bolingbroke	.. Mr. L. F. Chapuy	Mrs. Bailey	.. Miss Kitty Loftus
Bellamy..	Mr. Lawrence Caird		

The stage has certainly come to a deplorable pass when it is possible for so inept and feeble a piece as *The White Silk Dress* to find its way into a first-class west-end theatre. Both as a writer of musical comedy, *teste The Shop Girl*, and of serious drama, Mr. Dam, the author, has previously shown considerable promise. That he should have imagined his latest farce would for a moment be tolerated reveals a state of mind almost inexplicable. *The White Silk Dress* is a formless, witless, pointless piece of work, which no writer possessing the slightest regard for

his artistic reputation would dream of offering to the public. If we speak strongly, it is because we have the best interests of the theatre at heart, and are unwilling to see it sink to the level of a penny gaff. Again and again it has been our painful duty to protest against the absurdities and inanities that nowadays pass muster as humour, and to lament the lack of taste existing in those who are content to suffer such things without remark. Fortunately, the reception accorded to Mr. Dam's piece would seem to argue that our efforts have not been wholly in vain, and that the public is beginning to weary of the trashy matter foisted upon it. *The White Silk Dress* doubtless is not appreciably worse than many of its kind, but that fact can hardly be considered as either an excuse for, or a justification of its existence.

The plot is nothing. A foolish old lady gives publicity to a rumour that she has died abroad. Her will is about to be proved, when it is suggested that a later document exists, and lies concealed in a white silk dress which has gone astray. A hunt after the missing garment is accordingly instituted, but in the end it is discovered that the old woman is not dead at all, and has only been playing a trick upon her relations in order to test their affection. Mr. Arthur Roberts appeared as Jack Hammersley, a barrister, who superintends the quest. Unfortunately, Mr. Roberts, in a straightforward part, is never at his best, and, let us admit at once, was not even comparatively good on the first performance of the farce. The neatest bit of character drawing was furnished by Mr. W. Cheesman as an impecunious bailiff. Miss Decima Moore's sweetness and grace were thrown away upon the part of Mary Turner, while Miss Kitty Loftus vainly endeavoured to infuse life into the piece by her lively acting and singing. The music by Mr. A. McLean and Mr. R. Somerville was, on the other hand, fairly bright and pleasing.

The Belle of Cairo.

An Original Play with Music, in Two Acts, by Cecil Raleigh and Kinsey Peile. Music and Lyrics by Kinsey Peile. Produced at the Court Theatre, October 10.

The Earl of Bulcester	Mr. Charles Wibrow
Lady Molly Rosemere	Miss Ethel Earle
Lady Ermyntrude Rosemere	Miss M. Thorne
James Parker	Mr. Arthur Nelstone
Susan Smith	Miss Maud Wilmot
Cook's Guide	Mr. F. D. Pengelly
Mr. Stallabrass	Mr. V. M. Seymour
Maud Stallabrass	Miss Rieke
Martha Stallabrass	Miss Loraine
Mary Stallabrass	Miss Bliss
Mr. Patching	Mr. H. V. Surrey
Mrs. Patching	Miss Grace Dudley
Luigi	Mr. Horniman
Duval Bey	Mr. Eugene Mayeur
Captain Sir Gilbert Fane	Mr. John Peachey
Major Trevor	Mr. Philip Leslie
Lieutenant Marchmont	Mr. E. W. Tarver
Surgeon Captain Cree	Mr. Roy
Ali Ibrahim	Mr. Michael Dwyer
Barbara	Miss Guilia Warwick
Nephthys	Miss May Yohe

The chief merit possessed by *The Belle of Cairo* is its prettiness. In other respects, its title to consideration is of the

slightest. The plot is unusually thin, even for this class of piece, and the humour of the dialogue, when it is not vulgar, is commonplace. Lyrics and music are equally destitute of that gracefulness and fluent movement which one at least expects to find in musical comedy. Nor does the piece really justify its existence by providing Miss May Yohe with an effective part. True she figures in the first act as an Arabian beauty, while in the second she is permitted to don the clothes of a boy-bugler; but in neither capacity has she any great opportunity for displaying her powers, either as actress or singer. The plot adheres pretty closely to Miss Yohe's changes of costume. Nephthys, the heroine, has fallen in love with a young English officer, although her father desires her to wed the keeper of a gambling saloon in Cairo. So to save herself she dresses as a youth, and accompanies her lover on a campaign against a party of Dervishes. Add to this the very slenderest of intrigues in which a British peer, his two daughters, a native lady, and a couple of minor officers are mixed up, and you have pretty well got the gist of the tale. Nor is there much to be said for the performance. Suffering from extreme hoarseness, Miss Yohe was obviously unable to attack her music with the requisite spirit, while probably from the same cause her acting seemed nerveless and heavy. Miss Guilia Warwick gave a capital sketch of a skittish middle-aged lady, and by her accomplished singing secured for herself the vocal honours of the evening. But quite the greatest success was obtained by Mr. Arthur Nelstone, a wonderfully nimble and ingenious eccentric dancer, in conjunction with his colleague, Miss Maud Wilmot.

Teddy's Wives.

A Farcical Comedy, in Three Acts, by Fergus Hume. Produced at the Strand Theatre, September 24.

The Honble. Teddy Miles .. Mr. Mallaby	Mrs. Cottingham.. .. Miss Emily Thorne
Oliver Walford .. .. Mr. Gerald Moore	Nora.. .. .. .. Miss Audrey Ford
The McNab .. .. Mr. Fred Thorne	Mrs. Cruppies .. ..Miss Alice Mansfield
Solomon Isaacs .. Mr. Cecil H. Thornbury	The Honble. Mrs. Miles Miss Maude Millett
Choldy .. .. .. Mr. J. Wheatman	

A more childish or invertebrate piece than *Teddy's Wives* it would be difficult to imagine. Add to this that it is distinguished throughout by a fine flavour of blatant vulgarity, and the reader will understand that further criticism of its many defects is superfluous. The story deals with the efforts of a young man who, having surreptitiously married a pretty girl, pretends, by way of misleading his creditors, that he has espoused a wealthy and particularly vulgar widow called Mrs. Cottingham. To

attempt to describe in detail the events that spring from this complication would be to pay Mr. Fergus Hume's farrago of nonsense a compliment it does not deserve. By his latest production the author of *The Mystery of a Hansom Cab* incontestably proves that if he possesses the merest scintilla of dramatic instinct he has taken the most elaborate pains to conceal the fact from the public. Over the acting there is no need to linger. That competent artists like Miss Maude Millett and Mr. Fred Thorne should lend their co-operation to such a performance says little for their sense of artistic self-respect. A Mr. Mallaby, who is responsible for the production, played the leading part. He is hardly to be congratulated on his own lack of managerial wisdom.

A Crown of Thorns.

A Romantic Drama, in Four Acts, by Gilbert Elliott. Produced at the New Olympic Theatre, October 10.

Count Vauthier ..	Mr. Gilbert Elliott	Doctor Ricardo	Mr. A. Robertson
Henri Lefranc	Mr. Dudley Clinton	Countess Vauthier ..	Mrs. Walter Edwin
Baron Holstein.. ..	Mr. William Felton	Saionara	Miss Alice de Winton
Frondé	Mr. John Ottaway	Ninette	Miss Georgie Wright
Picot	Mr. Harry Paulton, Jun.	Marie	..Miss Millicent Marsden
Hans	Mr. John G. McMahon	Mother Bagnolet ..	.. Miss Emily Edwin
Abbé Lavalle	Mr. Louis Ford	Mathilde	Miss Agnes Hewitt
Officer of Directoire ..	Mr. Charles M. Holmes		

A Crown of Thorns is a rather crude melodrama of the French Revolutionary period, and of a kind more usually found in the provinces than at a west-end theatre. It possesses one scene in particular, of which, however, the thrilling qualities and sensational effects are more than sufficient to elicit the approving applause of pit and gallery. This is the scene on the scaffold, where the hero runs a serious risk of suffering decapitation by the guillotine. Needless to say, neither the event nor the head comes off. To relate the remaining complications of the story would serve no useful purpose. Of the acting it is enough to say that it was more or less on a level with the piece.

Love in Idleness.

An Original Comedy, in Three Acts, by Louis N. Parker and E. J. Goodman. Produced at Terry's Theatre, October 21.

Mortimer Pe dlebury ..	Mr. Edward Terry	Maggie	.. Miss Hilda Rivers
Frank	Mr. W. E. Ashcroft	Louise Gondinot ..	Miss Beatrice Ferrar
Rushey Platt, Esq., M.P.	Mr. Gilbert Farquhar	Abigail Bright ..	..Miss Bella Pateman
Jack Fenton	Mr. Sydney Brough	Mrs. Trott	.. Miss Kate Mills
Eugene Gondinot	Mr. H. de Lange	Martha	.. Miss Jessie Danvers

The authors of *Love in Idleness* are to be congratulated on producing so wholesome and delightful a piece of work as their new comedy can honestly claim to be. The story they set forth to

narrate is not certainly of the strongest, it is even conceivable that some may bring against it the reproach of thinness; but it possesses, at least, all the merits peculiar to a charming idyll. The dialogue, moreover, is instinct with a pleasant sense of humour, and the characterisation throughout most happy. The theme selected by the authors is, it is true, of a somewhat monotonous nature, but lack of variety is counterbalanced by a plentiful supply of wit and observation. Mortimer Pendlebury, passing rich on £250 a year, has through sheer laziness allowed all life's prizes to slip through his fingers. "To-morrow" has become with him a byword, while the slightest necessity for action is regarded with horror. Suddenly he is awakened to the fact that his incurable inertness has imperilled the welfare of those most dear to him. He vows to amend his ways, and incontinently plunges into a course of feverish activity. But forgetful of the proverb, *in medio tutissimus ibis*, he speedily discovers that he has only served to make matters worse by his inconsiderate over-haste. With the best possible intentions he prevents one nephew from gaining a much-coveted post, robs another of his sweetheart, and his dearly-loved niece of the possibility of marrying the man she adores. Fortunately, there is a good fairy at hand in the shape of the woman whom, but for his pitiful habit of procrastination, he might have made his wife long ago. Chiefly by her help, order is at length fashioned out of chaos, and the curtain drops on a scene of general happiness. In Mortimer Pendlebury Mr. Edward Terry has a capital part, which he plays with unfailing spirit and a fine sense of its many peculiarities. Mr. A. E. Ashcroft and Mr. Sydney Brough are excellent as the ill-used nephews, while Miss Bella Pateman, after a long absence from the London stage, returns to enact the character of Abigail Bright with all her old charms and tenderness. An admirable bit of impersonation is Mr. H. de Lange's study of a peppery Frenchman, while Miss Hilda Rivers, whose name is new to us, gives a delightful sketch of a frank, warm-hearted young English girl. The remaining characters are in thoroughly capable hands.

IN PARIS.

This is the time of year when the theatres get into working form again. The Palais Royal has reopened with *Dindon*, the Variétés with *La Vie Parisienne*, the Gymnase with *La Famille Pont-Biquet*, the Vaudeville with *Lysistrata*, the Bouffes with *Miss Helyett*, and the Renaissance with the *Dame aux Camélias*, all revivals, as is usual at the start. The Comédie Française has

contributed *Le Gendre de Monsieur Poirier* and *Le monde où l'on s'ennuie*. The only novelties are *Capitaine Fracasse*, adapted from Théophile Gautier's novel by his son-in-law, M. Emile Bergerat, and an adaptation of Schiller's *Don Carlos*, both at the Odéon, and both more or less failures, in spite of the proverbial good work expected from new——it will be remembered that M. Antoine is the new broom at the Odéon. *Capitaine Fracasse* does not belong to dramatic literature, and all the ingenuity of M. Bergerat and decorative instincts of M. Antoine are powerless to infuse into it the necessary movement for a five hours' sitting. M. Charles Raymond's adaptation of *Don Carlos* was not equally unsuccessful, and in this case rather the insufficiency of the acting than faults of the adaptation account for a comparative failure. Besides this, it beats *Capitaine Fracasse* in lasting nearly six hours, and the most brilliant performances can hardly stand an ordeal so tough as that. Nor is *Don Carlos* a piece which holds the spectator spellbound from beginning to end, although it contains passages of great poetic beauty and dramatic intensity. The first two acts of the drama elicited some enthusiasm, but the rest of the piece fell more or less flat. In fact, curtailed as it has been by the translator (it occupies 200 pages 8vo. in the ordinary editions of the original), it needs still further abridgment to fit in with the exigencies of the contemporary theatre-goer.

IN BERLIN.

There has been considerable activity in the theatrical world of Berlin during the last month. Nor has it come before it was needed, for the summer was very barren of dramatic interest, a fact due, no doubt, in part to the Industrial Exhibition, which did not serve to fill the theatres, or at any rate the more serious of them. At the Lessing theatre, the manager, Herr Oscar Blumenthal, has produced a piece of his own, entitled *Das Einmaleins* (*The Multiplication Table*). An architect named Hubert (Herr Stahl) quarrels with his wife (Fräulein Gross), because she is too extravagant, and does not pay sufficient heed to the multiplication table. They might make it up at once if they felt so disposed, but instead of doing so they postponed their reconciliation to the end of the third act. In the meantime Fräulein Jäger falls in love with Herr Schönfeld. The remaining gaps are filled up by the quarrel of an old bachelor (Herr Engels) with the bridegroom's father, and by the comic relief afforded by the same

gentleman. The jokes with which the piece is liberally besprinkled are occasionally very amusing; the only fault about them is that they subserve no purpose but that of exciting laughter. They have no necessary connection with the play, and are in no way contributory to its logical and necessary conclusion. The author also commits the mistake of introducing the audience to commonplace characters, who, in some instances, descend to unpardonable breaches of good form, to use the mildest term. For example, he allows the amiable, but in money matters flighty, wife of the architect to gamble on the Stock Exchange behind her husband's back, and to flirt with an old buck in order to wheedle him out of £100. He also allows a landed proprietor, a capital fellow, of whom no harm is known, to set about obtaining a wife as one would buy a nag at a horsefair, the neighbours being kept at a distance meanwhile, as they are apt to insinuate blemishes in the lady's reputation, as they might if one were making inquiries into the points of a horse. The author wishes it to be supposed that he is representing good, respectable society; but in this he fails, as from the foregoing it must be obvious he could not help doing. The comedy was played with much brightness by all the actors, and the first act was most cordially received. Applause followed the other two acts, but in a less degree in each case.

The successful opening on October 1 of the new Theater des Westens was a great event in the theatrical world of Berlin, and especially for Berlin society, which attended in greater force than on any first night for many years past. It is therefore to be regretted that the piece selected for performance was not adequate to the occasion. It was entitled *A Thousand and One Nights*, and was a poetical fairy tale by Herr Holger Drachmann. In its book form the story is very agreeable, but as a stage play it is so wearisome that a feeling of boredom crept over the house in the first act and continued progressively until the end. The house is in every way a great acquisition to the German capital, and will unquestionably be a source of increased attraction as time goes on.

At the Berliner Theater the German version of *My Official Wife*, the performance which was forbidden some months ago, has seen the light, and has been well received. The peculiarity of this play is the immense amount of factitious popularity which it has derived owing to its prohibition. The book itself has sold by thousands on the Continent, where it would probably have never made its way but for the advertisement thus given to it by a short-sighted censorship.

At the Thalia Theatre—the name given to the newly-baptised Adolf Ernst Theater—*Cousin Cousine*, a vaudeville in three acts,

by Maurice Ordonneau and Henri Kúrnel, the music by Gaston Serpette, has been the first piece produced.

IN VIENNA.

Ernst von Wolzogen, a German playwright, has, following the example of Hermann Sudermann, who allowed his *Glück im Winkel* to be performed for the first time in Vienna, given the Viennese public the pleasure of seeing *Ein unbeschriebenes Blatt* before any German audience. The title of the comedy, *An Unwritten Page*, is explained in the first act, when a professor of mathematics returns from his honeymoon with a young and childish wife, who has experienced nothing, lived through nothing, is, in fact, "an unwritten page." This child-wife meets with the first tragic conflict of her existence in a curious way. She knows and cares nothing for society or for housekeeping. She has a pet—a white mouse—upon which she expends all her affection, and it is through the Professor's old housekeeper and her cat that her eyes are opened to the realities of life. That is the situation of the first act, and very droll and amusing it is. The author was several times called before the curtain when it fell at the conclusion of this act, but the situations of the first act were repeated with less skill in the second and third, and the result was that the audience became first bored and then almost hostile.

The Carl Theater has produced a three-act operetta of American origin, *The Magician of the Nile*, by a Mr. Smith, the music by Mr. Herbert. Much money was expended on the mounting of this burlesque, the words of which are pure nonsense, but more amusing than all the German and French comic opera libretti. The music is characterised by great delicacy and charm. At the Burg Theater Leo Ebermann's three-act drama, *Die Athenerin*, has met with a very friendly reception. The author makes use of the ancient Greeks in this play only as a kind of pretext by which he may put before the audience a corrupt but charming woman without offending modern sensibilities. It is vain, however, to ask us to believe that anywhere, or at any time, a lady could have existed who was first a Parisian *cocotte*, then a German housewife, and lastly an ancient Greek *hetaira*. Such a woman could exist nowhere else than in the brain of a modern playwright, bewildered by "degeneration," Ibsenism, and the novel of the period. As for the plot, it is slight, and the treatment is involved, while the characters correspond so little to their classical names that they sometimes almost have the

effect of being parodies. Yet, in spite of his sins against the spirit of history, poetry, and philosophy, Herr Ebermann, the author, possesses a very marked talent for inventing dramatic situations; and it would not be surprising if he were to become a really eminent writer for the stage.

A new piece of the Volksstück kind, entitled *Noth Kennt Kein Gebot* (*Necessity Knows no Law*), has been produced at the Raimund Theater. The play is by a newcomer—Herr Rudolph Christoph Jenny. The story is that of a carpenter who finds himself face to face with starvation. His wife is dying, and he has no funds to pay for food, to say nothing of the rent of his room. In a few hours, if the money is not forthcoming, he and his little family will be turned out of doors. The carpenter is at his wits' end. Fortunately for him, as he thinks, he comes across a 50-gulden note, with which he pays his rent. The agent who receives it knows the poor man's circumstances, and is surprised that he has been able to get funds together. He makes inquiries, and the result is that a 50-gulden note is found missing. It is the property of the manager of the house. The carpenter is arrested, and admits his guilt, but at the last moment he is saved by the wife of the man whose money he has taken. He confesses to her that he took the note, and he says that he believed it to be the property of a rich man to whom he could return it when he could get work again. The good woman believes his story, and, knowing the desperate straits in which the carpenter is situated, determines to screen him. She conceals a 50-gulden note in a book; this is discovered at the right moment, and the man is set at liberty. Such is the bald outline of the plot. The play is deficient in many respects. It betrays a naïveté which is somewhat surprising in a writer who is evidently a man of power, and it passes too quickly from grave to gay; but it is a very promising performance, and shows that Anzengruber has now a serious rival.

IN ITALIAN CITIES.

In the last week of September the Teatro Lirico Internazionale, Milan, opened its autumn season with MM. Godard and Cain's opera *La Vivandière*. The story unfolded in the course of the opera is an episode in the conflicts which took place in France at the beginning of the First Republic. The youthful son of a reactionary marquis becomes fired with martial zeal by the stirring events of the time, and resolves to share the fortunes of the soldiers of his country. In this determination he

is rather encouraged than otherwise by Nanna, an orphan girl with whom he is in love. But the Marquis de Rieul, the young man's father, takes a different view of the matter; and, after disavowing his son, heaps curses on his head, and banishes him from his home. On hearing what has occurred, Nanna makes up her mind to be near George (the banished son), and when he joins the ranks of the revolutionary army she finds a refuge in a *vivandière's* waggon and a friend and protector in Marion, a *vivandière* characteristic of the age. After the lapse of some little time, in the course of which George has been raised to the rank of sergeant, the inflexible old marquis takes command of a band of reactionaries, and events so turn out that the troops commanded on opposite sides by father and son come within an ace of engaging in conflict. Being by this time aware of George's history, the good-hearted *vivandière* intervenes, however, to prevent the meeting of George and the marquis on a field of battle, and succeeds in persuading George's superior officer to send him away with despatches. The battle which follows results in favour of the revolutionary body, and the marquis is taken prisoner, with no prospect of escaping condemnation to death. Marion, who has come to entertain almost maternal feelings towards both George and Nanna, again intervenes, and, with the full knowledge that her act means but the exchange of her life for his, contrives to effect the escape of the prisoner. Matters then look very serious for the courageous *vivandière*, but at the critical moment a decree of amnesty saves her from the guillotine. Although M. Godard's compositions are known in Italy to those who attend concerts, this was the first time that one of his operas had been performed in this country, and consequently the occasion was regarded as one of importance. Signora Jan-Boyer and Signorina Leone interpreted the parts of Marion and Nanna respectively, in a manner which aroused great enthusiasm in the audience, and Signor Bonci, the young tenor, who played the part of George, acquitted himself most creditably. Signor Dufriche as La Balafre, Signor Federici as Capt. Bernard, Signor Navarrini as the Marquis, and Signor Negrini as La Fleur, also distinguished themselves in a manner worthy of mention. *Il Maestro*, a comedy by Duke Carafa d'Andria, was played at the Arena Nazionale, Florence, by the Pasta-Lorenzo company, but with no very happy issue. While giving all possible credit to the noble author, the local newspapers were strangely unanimous in forgetting to state that the plot of *Il Maestro* was taken in its entirety from Bourget's romance of *Le Disciple*. Great things were expected of the production of a translation of Ostrovsky's *I Funzionari* at the Valle, Rome, but there proved to

be few of the elements of success in the Russian play. The excessive length of some of the scenes, the neglect to cut out several passages which are no longer to the taste of an Italian audience, and a lack of clearly-defined personality in some of the principal characters formed, indeed, a list of condemnatory circumstances which pointed so strongly to failure that the performance was not repeated. At the Politeama Margherita, Genoa, Señor Enrice Cebada's Spanish company has been giving a series of performances, which included *El Barberillo de Lavapies* and *El Tambor de los Granaderos*. In their native country these two farces are always sure of a good welcome, but the appreciation of the Genoese audiences was, at the best, but lukewarm. *Scomparso*, one of MM. Bisson and Sylvane's comedies in an Italian dress, made a tolerably successful appearance at the Manzoni, Milan, though it must be confessed that its humour did not seem to appeal so strongly to Italian susceptibilities as do some of the many other works of the kind which are transported over the Alps from Parisian stages.

IN MADRID.

The theatres of Madrid are once again open, and are now well on their way through their autumn programmes. The Zarzuela inaugurated the new season with a company which, although it has many merits, is not equal to that of the last season, inasmuch as there are missing from its list, without efficient substitutes, such names as Señor Rossell, Señorita Lazaro, and Señor Castilla. The new company opened with *El Ano Pasado por Agua*, in the performance of which they laboured under the serious disadvantage of playing parts which their predecessors had already made famous, and stamped to a great extent with their own individual personalities. This drawback must serve as an excuse for what was manifestly regarded as a somewhat poor performance. Under the management of Señor Enrique Chicote, the Teatro Martin opened well with a treble programme consisting of *El Padron Municipal*, *Sin Comerlo ni Beberlo*, and *Nicolas*. At the Apolo the production of *De Vuelta del Vivero*, a play which, though fairly well known, has never before appeared on the boards of that theatre, gave rise to so great an amount of interest that the auditorium on the opening night had far more the appearance of a first night than that of a revival. The performance was excellent, and the applause accorded to Señorita Joaquin Pino, Señora Vidal, and Señores Mesejo and Rodriguez was thoroughly merited.

Hé Dicho o' La Casa del Deputado, a diverting little farce by Señores Limendoux and Rojas, was played very successfully at the Romea. Its humour is based on current political questions, and some very good situations have been constructed by the authors, while the music which Señor Lleo has written to accompany the farce is excellently adapted to it. The Eslava also scored a success with a new farce entitled *La Marcha de Cadiz*. It is from the pens of Señores Celso Lucio and Alvarez, and its title is derived from a march known as the "Cadiz March," which is played at the present time at almost every public function, and is ground out on street organs in every corner of Spain where such instruments are to be found. Both libretto and music are good, and the work bears promise of many future reproductions.

IN NEW YORK.

The practice of reproducing on the American stage the plays that have had or are having successful runs in London seems to be fast going out of favour—much to the delight of those critics whose self-imposed duty it is to watch over the interests of the national drama. Only one production marked "London success" is to be recorded this month—*The Geisha*—which was a veritable triumph for all concerned. Mr. Daly has staged it at his theatre with his usual magnificence, and the music of Mr. Sydney Jones and Mr. Lionel Monckton is already being heard in the streets. Miss Dorothy Morton as O Mimosa and Miss Violet Lloyd as Molly are the best of an excellent cast. At the Knickerbocker (late Abbey's) Theatre, *Half a King*, a comic opera of French origin, set to music by Herr Englander, has been produced with gratifying results by Mr. Francis Wilson, who himself plays the principal part. *Sue*, a three-act drama by Mr. Bret Harte and Mr. T. Edgar Pemberton, has had a run of four weeks at Hoyt's Theatre—a smaller measure of success than by reason of its stirring plot and clever construction it seemed to deserve. The play had every advantage in interpretation, with Miss Annie Russell and Mr. Joseph Haworth in the principal characters. *Lost, Strayed, or Stolen*, another musical comedy of French origin, is drawing large audiences to the Fifth Avenue Theatre. Mr. William Hoey, who many years ago earned the appellation "Old Hoss" by his performance in *A Parlour Match*, is again to be seen at the Herald Square Theatre in that inimitable bit of comedy work. His old-time partner, Mr. Charles E. Evans, is also sustaining his original *rôle* of I. McCorker, as is Miss Minnie

French as Innocent Kidd. Mr. Oscar Hammerstein has written, set to music, and sumptuously produced a comic opera entitled *Santa Maria* at the Olympia. The music, though artistically the weakest part of the work, is calculated to appeal to popular favour, and there can be little doubt that the production will amply repay the versatile author. Miss Camille D'Arville is at the head of the cast. *The Merry Tramps* is the title of the spectacular play with which the Liliputians, after an absence of some years from New York, are delighting the Star Theatre audiences. *Mary Pennington*, originally produced at a matinée in London, won unequivocal praise on its first presentation in New York at Palmer's Theatre. Miss Georgia Cayvan, in the name part, brings out the satire of the play with admirable deftness, and is mannish or womanly as the occasion demands. At the Garrick Theatre a revival of *Evangeline* is holding the boards, presumably for the purpose of affording Mr. Henry E. Dixey an opportunity of displaying his abilities in the part of the Lone Fisherman. The only melodrama whose production is to be recorded this month is *Secret Service* at the Garrick. The author is Mr. William Gillette—a skilled hand in this kind of work—and he has done himself full justice. The Civil War, as is now usual in melodrama, forms the background of the story. Mr. Gillette himself impersonates the hero, but he is better as dramatist than as actor. The piece seems destined for a long term of public favour.

Echoes from the Green Room.

MANY statements have recently been made as to Sir Henry Irving's intentions for the immediate future. Possibly, however, it may appear that he has decided upon nothing except the revival of *Richard III.* and the production of *Madame Sans-Gêne.*

THAT large-minded prelate, the late Archbishop of Canterbury, did not fail to note the advance made by the stage of late years, and at one time had under consideration the idea of writing for *The Theatre* an article as to the knighthood of Sir Henry Irving.

IT would not be surprising to hear that Sir Henry Irving had received an invitation to appear at the Spanish Court. The old love of theatricals there has been revived of late years, Madame Sarah Bernhardt being one of the chief players. Her guerdon on the occasion was a beautiful bracelet in a casket.

MORNING performances of *Cymbeline* are arranged for November 11 and 25, and December 2 and 9.

MR. ALEXANDER played before the Prince and Princess of Wales during their visit to Lord Londonderry's seat, Wynyard-park, on October 22nd. On that night his part in *The Prisoner of Zenda* was taken by Mr. Yorke Stephens, who has been playing it for some time in the provinces.

MR. ARTHUR COLLINS, stage-manager to the late Sir Augustus Harris, has, with the support of a syndicate, secured the option of taking Drury Lane Theatre for a short term. All being well, he will begin next spring with an English Opera season, produce a drama in the autumn, and at Christmas will have a pantomime.

IN New York it is thought possible that Madame Nordica may, after all, be re-engaged by the management of the Metropolitan Opera House for the coming season, the recent death of Frau Klafsky having left the company without an Isolde.

MR. HARE will begin his second American tour at Montreal on November 16th, returning home next April.

MR. ALEXANDER intends to have a series of *matinées* at the St. James', beginning this month with *As You Like It*, the manager himself playing Orlando, Miss Julia Neilson Rosalind, Mr. W. H. Vernon Jaques, Mr. Fernandez the Banished Duke, Miss Dorothea Baird Phœbe, Mr. H. B. Irving (an excellent Jaques) Oliver, and Mr. H. V. Esmond Touchstone.

MR. PINERO, braced by a holiday in the Engadine, has returned to town, and is now hard at work at his next play.

M. JEAN DE RESZKE and the Countess de Mailly were married early last month. According to his present intentions, he will not reappear on the stage, at least for some time. He has amassed a large fortune, and his wife is an heiress in her own right.

Miss Sybil Sanderson is shortly to appear in *Esclairmonde* at the Imperial Opera House, St. Petersburg.

Sir A. C. Mackenzie, so long obliged to write serious and even solemn music, utilised his holiday to write a comic opera, which is expected to appear during the coming season. Mr. F. C. Burnand is responsible for the libretto.

Mr. George Alexander has taken the Royalty Theatre, where, as the present number of *The Theatre* is going through the press, he produces *His Little Dodge*, a farcical comedy adapted from the French by Mr. Justin Huntley McCarthy. The cast includes Mr. Fred Terry and Mr. Weedon Grossmith. It is to be preceded by a "theme in one act," *The Storm*, in which Mr. H. B. Irving and Mr. H. V. Esmond will appear.

The Prisoner of Zenda has been revived at the St. James's Theatre, Miss Julia Neilson succeeding Miss Evelyn Millard as the Princess Flavia, Other new-comers in the cast are Miss Ellis Jeffreys, Mr. Aubrey Smith, and Mr. H. B. Irving.

Mr. Scott's notice of the revival is not without interest. He says:—"We have been preaching a wearisome sermon, we fear, and leading, for years past, a kind of 'forlorn hope' against the grievous sin of under-acting. Now that romantic drama has come to the front again, it is found that underacting is impossible. The dawdle of English comedy, the tricks of English life transplanted on the stage, do not suit romantic drama. Let Miss Julia Neilson have the credit of waking up this sleepy art of ours, and proving, by her delightful performance of last night, the truth of much that we have insisted upon with such persistency. It is with sincere pleasure that we have the opportunity of giving our special congratulation to Miss Julia Neilson, because, with great gifts of her own, great and special gifts, she has been the unfortunate victim of bad training. She started her career in the fatal play called *Brantingham Hall* as a heaven-born actress. We do not believe in heaven-born actresses. It was not her fault that she had to pick up her training, bit by bit, with no one to guide and counsel her. All that she showed last night she had in her years ago, but she was outright unschooled, untrained. The Haymarket school did her very little good indeed. The promise was there, but we all waited for something very much better than the *Dancing Girl*. She was handicapped, as she has ever been handicapped, by want of proper guidance. *When amateurs guide amateurs there is almost a certainty of collapse;* but when Miss Julia Neilson joined Charles Wyndham and played so admirably in *The Home Secretary* we all felt that here was the sincere promise of an actress of presence and of power as well. The prize came last night, when Flavia was acted as the part ought to be acted." The italics (apart from the names of plays) are ours.

In the way of long runs, *Our Boys* has now been beaten by *Charley's Aunt*.

"I wonder," Mr. Clement Scott writes in the *Whitehall Review*, "how many Rosalinds I have seen in my time, and I wonder why fate has been so cruel as to deny me the privilege of seeing the one delightful actress play that—to my mind—one character which, surely, beyond all other Shaksperean characters, was written for her. Will Ellen Terry never be seen as the fair Rosalind? It seems to me there never was a character more suited to her temperament, more akin to every touch of her being."

Mr. Clement Scott notes the "pretentious fallacy" that because fashion dines late therefore serious theatrical art is at a discount. "The dining hour," he says, "has nothing whatever to do with the matter. If anyone wants a solid simple proof to show the utter absurdity of such a contention, let them look at the pavement in front of the Lyceum Theatre between six and seven o'clock every evening, and the carriage line a few minutes before eight." It will be news to many that the playgoers on "the pavement" have not dined hours before.

In the *Graphic* for September 26th there is a full-page portrait, by M. Paul Renouard, of Sir Henry Irving in the act of making-up in his dressing room at the Lyceum. It is accompanied by admirable letterpress, evidently based upon sound and even original information. The *Graphic* has taught us to look for good work from M. Renouard; but we do not remember to have seen any drawing of his at once so faithful and so striking as this portrait. Sir Henry Irving, as the writer of the memoir points out, has an infinite capacity for taking pains. On one occasion he went through a particularly trying first performance, held his usual informal reception of friends on the stage, and did not get home until at least four o'clock. Meanwhile a new rehearsal had been called for ten o'clock that morning. "Of course that rehearsal did not come off?" asked a guest on the following day, meeting a member of the company. "It did," was the reply, "and Irving was the first to arrive."

Two remarkable artists whose names are likely to be remembered in stage history have just passed away. Mr. George du Maurier, who in early life thought of going on the stage as a singer, won for himself a high position, not only as a satirist of society foibles, but as the author of *Trilby*, in which many old experiences of the Quartier Latin were embodied, and which, cleverly dramatised, has had so marked a success in America and England. Another death to be deplored is that of Mr. Fred Barnard, excellent as an illustrator of Dickens, and the author of so many of the sketches to be found in the biographies of Sir Henry Irving.

An interesting *matinée* in aid of the Royal General Theatrical Fund will be held at Drury Lane on November 12th, Sir Henry Irving being one of those who will appear.

Mrs. Bernard Beere, we regret to state, is seriously ill.

Mr. George Grossmith writes to contradict what he calls the "ridiculous" report that he is connected with a syndicate to take over the Savoy Theatre.

Mrs. Kendal has joined in the Beerbohm-Scott fray with her usual vigour. "This poor man," Mrs. Kendal continues, referring to Mr. Scott, "has lost all judgment," and she goes on to call for a reform in dramatic criticism. "When I see," she says in this connection, "a dramatic critic looking fat, with a diamond breast-pin and a diamond ring, I go home and weep. I've seen so many—I weep very often." But what is the exact kind of reform that Mrs. Kendal would suggest is not made quite clear.

The large proportion of clergymen among the Lyceum audiences has long been a feature of that theatre under Sir Henry Irving's management. Many seats had been booked by them for the weeks immediately following upon the death of the Archbishop of Canterbury, and in the ordinary course, as they could not attend the theatre at such a time, and as the rule is that no money can be returned, their tickets would have been useless to

them. But Sir Henry Irving, with his usual tact, gave directions at once that the rule should be broken, and all the clergymen in this case were allowed either to exchange their tickets for later dates or to receive back the sums they had expended. Such graceful acts do more to reconcile Church and Stage than any number of guilds.

THE Actors' Association is, we are glad to note, in a flourishing condition. The presence of Sir Henry Irving in the chair at a Council meeting the other day was warmly welcomed by the members as a notable sign of the unity of the profession in following up the object for which the Association was founded. The annual performance in aid of the funds will take place at the Lyceum on December 3.

VERY few people can know that the late William Morris once wrote a play—not a poetical drama of dreamland, full of exquisite imagery and tender, delicate imagination, as one might guess—but an extravaganza satirising the men and the manners of to-day. It was played for the benefit of some Socialist organisation, and Mr. Morris himself took one of the chief parts, hugely delighting the audience, if report may be held true, and showing a remarkable aptitude for the portrayal of comic character. On another occasion the poet played Sir Jeremy Joles, the deaf old man in Mr. Heathcote's amusing *Duchess of Bayswater and Company*. Mr. Bernard Shaw declares that, if the theatre appealed to intelligent people, William Morris would have added to his many spheres of labour that of a writer of plays; but that, seeing the class of dramatic work provided by the majority of playhouses, he took no interest in the theatre at all.

THE question as to the unpunctual arrivals at theatres has again been raised. On the first night of *Cymbeline*, we remember, a distinguished journalist, whose seat was in the centre of the stalls, came in half-an-hour late. "Sir Henry Irving," writes a correspondent of *The Times*, "has done so much for the theatre-going public in the removal of abuses that I am encouraged to ask him through your columns to take the lead in one other much-needed measure of reform. I visited the Lyceum last evening with two ladies, and in our anxiety to see comfortably the whole of the splendid representation of *Cymbeline*, we took care to be in our places in the stalls some minutes before the rising of the curtain. Our pleasure, however, was continually marred during the first 15 or 20 minutes of the performance by people who came in late, and who—to reach their seats, in the same row with ours—kept struggling past us at intervals, distracting attention and obscuring the view of the stage. The beautiful dance in the triclinium scene was entirely lost upon us, owing to the appearance at the moment of three stout Venuses, whose transit effectually blotted out everything but themselves from the disc of our vision. Now, why should it not be a rule in theatres that those who arrive late should wait till the conclusion of the scene, or, if necessary, of the act?" Why indeed?

THIS year the Theatres and Music-Halls Licensing Committee of the London County Council have managed to get through their work with more good sense than they have displayed on previous occasions. In the case of the Palace Theatre they unanimously expressed regret that the Secretary of the National Vigilance Society should have made "utterly unfounded insinuations" in regard to the exhibition of living pictures. No objection was taken to the programme of the Empire Theatre, though notice was taken of the class of women frequenting the promenade.

Lord Dartmouth had a sensible word to say at the Church Congress in regard to two forms of amusement—theatres and dancing. On this subject, he remarked, Christian opinion had undergone a marked change. Mr. Lecky, in his *History of Rationalism*, stated that "the doctrine of the Church on this subject was clear and decisive;" the theatre was decisively condemned, and professional actors were pronounced to be in a condition of mortal sin. Now the theatrical profession was held in honour, and though there was much to be regretted in stageland, the leaders of the profession set a noble example of charity in its highest form.

After their performances of *Donna Diana* at the Prince of Wales's Theatre at the beginning of this month, Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Bourchier, with their company, will be off to America, not to return until the spring. The theatre Mr. Bourchier will take upon his return to London is as yet uncertain. He will need a larger stage than that of the Royalty when he produces *Charlotte Corday*.

St. George's Hall, so long the home of the German Reed entertainment and the haunt of the amateur, has now been acquired by the proprietors of Queen's Hall, and will, it seems probable, enter, under the fresh management, upon a new period of usefulness and prosperity. It claims the distinction of being the only place of entertainment in London which holds both the Lord Chamberlain's licence for stage plays and that of the County Council for music and dancing.

We receive as we are going to press, a copy of a new edition of Dr. Doran's well-known work, *Their Majesties' Servants; or, Annals of the English Stage*. The book derives an additional value from the fact that it is profusely illustrated with pictures of most of the old actors and actresses whose characteristics are so pleasantly set forth by the author.

The announcement of Mr. William Herbert's death, which occurred at Norwich on the morning of October 16, has awakened a feeling of genuine regret among the large number of friends to whom his kindly manner and courteous bearing had endeared him. Mr. Herbert's family name was Eden. The earlier years of his life were passed in the Army, in which he attained the rank of captain. Throughout this period he took every opportunity to indulge a passion for private theatricals, and on his retirement he not unnaturally turned to the stage for employment. Among his first successes was his appearance as Mr. Forester in Mr. F. C. Burnand's amusing comedy *The Colonel*, on its original production at the old Prince of Wales's Theatre in Tottenham-court-road. From that time until quite recently he was seldom out of a London engagement. During the past year or two his services were in less demand, and in the spring of the present year he accepted Mrs. Bernard Beere's offer to accompany her on tour as leading man. Mr. Herbert was, with his wife, on a holiday trip to Norfolk when he was struck down by his fatal malady. He was immediately conveyed to Norwich in the hope that an operation might lead to his recovery. Unfortunately, the shock to his system proved too great, and a few days later he sank under it. As an actor, Mr. Herbert never quite reached the first rank, but his work was always distinguished by thoughtfulness, care, and a nice regard for detail.

Miss Grace Huntley, famous in both pantomime and burlesque, but better known in the country than in London, died last month.

When Mr. Walker's play, *Mary Pennington, Spinster*, was produced in

the early summer, we remarked that the real success of the afternoon fell to Miss Mary Jerrold and Mr. Sydney Brough, as a pair of young lovers ; and added that no brighter, pleasanter, or more inspiriting performance could in either case be desired. Miss Jerrold, who is a grand-niece of Douglas Jerr old, has now followed up this promising *début*—it was absolutely her first appearance—by undertaking a long tour in America with Miss Cayvan's company. She bids fair to be a welcome addition to the ranks of our younger comedy actresses.

It was rather curious that just after Mr. James Mortimer's piece *My Artful Valet* (originally *Gloriana*) was revived by Mr. Welch at Terry's Theatre, the original farce upon which it was founded—*Le Truc d'Arthur* —was put on again at the Théâtre Cluny. Mr. Welch's short but successful experience as a manager should encourage him to try again.

The Salvation Army have lately been treated to official definitions of the attitude which their leaders adopt towards various forms of amusements. This is the view faithful soldiers are expected to hold with regard to the theatre.—"We never have been by any means opposed to the 'dramatic element' in saving and blessing the people. There is much in it that we may yet incorporate in our method of instructing people in the ways and wages of sin, and in leading them to God. The theatre is consecrated to meet the tastes and cravings of the people for entertainment, pleasure, and sensation. The people's fancies—not the people's present and eternal needs—decide the aim and character of the play. On the other hand, our theatre, if we may use the term without being misrepresented, is dedicated to represent what is actually true, and to lead people on the spot to renounce the pleasures of the world and to live for the highest and noblest end of man—the service of God and the deliverance of the world from the dominion of sin." This deliverance is rather ambiguous, but we gather from it that the theatre is not absolutely condemned.

Richmond, so closely associated with the memory of Edmund Kean, is to have a new theatre. Among the directors are Mr. Charles Cartwright, Mr. Lewis Waller, and Mr. Fred Horner, who propose to call it the New Lyceum, and lately obtained Sir Henry Irving's consent to open it. In this matter, however, a slight difficulty has arisen. Sir Henry Irving writes :—"I have been much astonished to see printed at the head of the prospectus of a new company, 'The Lyceum Theatre, Richmond, Surrey (Limited),' a letter from me written in answer to a request that I should open a new theatre. This letter has been published without my knowledge or consent, and I very much regret that it has been used in such a way. I shall be glad to have it made known that I have nothing whatever to do with the new company, or with the promotion of it, as I am told that the prominence given to my name in the prospectus, both as regards type and position, may lead investors to rely in some way upon me, especially as my letter, together with the name of the new theatre, 'The Lyceum,' may lead to the supposition that I am in some way associated with the enterprise. My knowledge is limited to the request to open the theatre."

Of course, special performances were given at the principal theatres in Paris during the visit of the Tsar and the Tsaritsa. Mme. Réjane appeared before them at Versailles in *Lolotte*, which seemed to afford the visitors infinite pleasure.

Rehearsals of *L'Evasion*, by M. de Brieux, have begun at the Comédie Française.

THE thousandth representation of *La Dame aux Camélias* has just been celebrated in Paris. It is a pity M. Dumas did not live to grace the occasion with his presence.

M. CLARETIE'S devotion to the Comédie Française, of which he has directed the affairs with such conspicuous ability, is too well known to need mention here. But an amusing tribute was paid to it the other day, during the time when the relations between the Maison de Molière and M. Coquelin were under discussion. A distinguished politician who had taken some part in arranging the settlement was irritated by M. Claretie's insistence upon the rights and duties of the institution he represents. "Why," he exclaimed, "my good sir, you seem to think of nothing but the Théâtre Français." "You could not," retorted the director, highly pleased, "you could not pay me a greater compliment."

M. HENRI CAIN, the author of *Jacques Callot*, the piece M. Coquelin has put on at the Porte St. Martin, is of course the distinguished painter whose pictures are so carefully looked for each year in the Salon. He has a fancy for writing plays in his spare time, and is known as the author of several comic opera libretti. Amongst others he wrote the "book" of *La Navarraise*, which has been given at Covent Garden. *Jacques Callot* was put together by a little band of artists, and finally reduced to shape by the practised hand of M. Cain. Little was expected to come of it, however, and surprise was great when, soon after it had been left at the Porte St. Martin, word came that is was underlined for immediate production. It is M. Coquelin's intention to play in this piece amongst others when he comes to London next year.

M. MOUNET-SULLY has re-appeared at the Comédie-Française in *Ruy Blas*, with Mlle. Bartet as the Queen.

THE committee of the Comédie-Française have accepted two short pieces by M. Edouard Pailleron, *Mieux Vaut Douceur* and *Et Violence*. Mme. Reichenberg will appear in the first.

RICHELIEU is likely to make another appearance on the stage before long. At any rate, a revival of *Mademoiselle de Belle-Isle*, with M. le Bargy as the Cardinal, is in contemplation at the Théâtre Français.

PARIS was recently startled by an *exposé* of the salaries received by its best known players, past and present. In 1840 the annual payments were as follows:—Rachel, 66,000 fr.; Mars, 40,000 fr.; Naudin, the tenor, 110,000 fr.; Cruvelli, 100,000 fr.; Rosita, 60,000 fr.; Fanny Ellsler, 46,000 frs.; and Taglioni, 36,000. Ten years ago things had so far improved that Lassalle received 11,000 fr. a month; Jean de Reszke, 6,000 fr.; Edouard de Reszke, 5,000 fr.; and Richard, 5,000 fr. At the same time the Opéra paid the following yearly stipends: Melchissédec, 48,000 fr.; Escalais, 45,000 fr.; Plançon, 24,000 fr.; Dufrane, 36,000 fr.; Rosita Mauri, 40,000 fr.; and Bosman and Adini, 30,000 fr. each. The Opéra Comique paid Maurel 8,000 fr. a month, a decade back, while the Comédie Française allowed to Got, Delaunay, and Febvre, 65,000 fr. a year each, Mounet-Sully, 58,000 fr.; Madeleine Brohan, 60,000 fr.; and Reichenberg, 50,000 fr. The present *sociétaires* of the Comédie Française receive a yearly salary of 12,000 fr., a share of profits reaching 20,000 fr., extra pay whenever they act, and some sort of a provision from the Fine Arts Department. Madame Sarah Bernhardt's present salary is 1,500 fr. a performance, Réjane's 800 fr., Jeanne Granier 600 fr., and Jane Hading 400 fr.

The French version of *Lady Windermere's Fan*, entitled *La Passante* was produced in Paris at the end of last month, too late for notice in our present number.

Signor Mascagni is prolific and industrious. During the last year he has composed two operas, *Zanetto* and *La Giapponese*. He is now at work on a third, the libretto being founded upon Herr Hauptmann's *Die Weber*. It would appear that he takes pride in what may prove a fatal facility of production. Not long ago he directed a performance in Berlin of one of his works. The orchestra hurried its tempi, and he lost his temper. "Body of Bacchus," he cried, "do you think that I wish you all to play as fast as I compose?"

One of our Italian correspondents writes to us on the subject of a reference in our last issue to Gustavo Salvini, a son of the eminent tragedian. "He inherits his father's beautiful voice, and, as you noticed, played at Naples two of his father's most famous *rôles*. But he is as good in comedy as in tragedy. In one month I saw him in seventeen different characters, the last being Mephistopheles. He was to have been in Milan this month, but is on his way to Bucharest."

We have to announce the death of Herr Hugo Ranzenberg, of the Raimund Theatre, Vienna, which occurred in the Rudolphinerhauss, Döbling, on September 21. He had suffered from gastric catarrh, and in consequence of his indisposition, the first performance of Dörmann's *Sein Sohn* was postponed until September 24. He appeared to get better, and resumed his work on the stage on September 18, when he appeared as Dr. Müller in Léon's *Gebildete Menschen*. During the performance he was so weak that he could only go through with his part by the greatest effort, and between the second and third acts he was obliged to have an injection of morphine in order to enable him to see the play through. He never got better after that evening. Ranzenberg was born in Pressburg, and was about forty years of age. He was one of the most talented actors of the Raimund Theatre.

That music has charms to soothe the savage breast has again been shown, this time at Lisbon. According to the *Amphion*, a burglar recently found his way into a room occupied by a clever pianist at an hotel in that city. Roused from his sleep, the latter sprang out of bed, seized a revolver, and demanded of the intruder what he wanted. "I only want," the burglar gasped, "to hear you play something from *Il Trovatore* or a Beethoven sonata!" Flattery is usually soothing; he was allowed to go away.

Miss Ada Rehan has returned to America, and will appear as Beatrice in *Much Ado About Nothing* at Daly's Theatre, New York, as soon as the run of *The Geisha* is over.

The Mapleson operatic season in New York was to begin on October 26 with *Aïda*. The repertory includes *Andrea Chenier*, *Lohengrin*, *The Flying Dutchman*, *Fidelio*, and *Manon*.

Mr. James Lewis, whose death we regretfully announced last month, was a stock actor by choice. Many a manager wished to make him a star, but he always declined such offers with a dubious shake of the head. He could not be induced to leave Mr. Daly's company, being content to draw a good salary as a Daly favourite. His wonderfully dry humour will long be

missed, both in England and in America. Mr. J. E. Dodson is another Lewis, although, as the *Spirit of the Times* points out, with a more artistic method.

Our Puritan forefathers used to hold that actors were one of the worst classes of the community. As far as evidence shows, they have always been one of the best. In America it is the same, as a correspondent in the *New York Mirror* helps to show. Last year he began to keep comparative accounts of the arrests of players and preachers as reported in the daily papers. He found that within the space of six months six actors and sixteen preachers had got into trouble. The causes of the arrests are thus set forth: Actors—drunk and disorderly, 1; larceny, 3; blackmail, 1; murderous assault, 1. Preachers—assaults of various kinds, 6; bribery, 1; embezzlement, 1; drunk and disorderly, 1; adultery, 1; sending obscene letters, 1; conspiracy to defraud, 2; false registration, 1; larceny, 1; forgery, 1. Of course, as the *Mirror* is charitable enough to point out preachers, like other men, are not infallible.

Mr. Henry E. Abbey, the well-known American theatrical manager, died on October 17 from nervous exhaustion, partly due, it is supposed, to the mortification he felt at the charges brought against him by his wife in the action for divorce she recently instituted. He had been connected with the stage from early life, and many tours by distinguished European artists, including Madame Sarah Bernhardt, Sir Henry Irving, and Mr. Hare, had been under his superintendence. Last summer he got into financial difficulties, but arrangements were soon made for continuing his business in conjunction with his partners, Mr. Schoeffel and Mr. Grau.

Miss Olga Nethersole, who is just beginning another American tour, will not, it is stated, ever play again in the version of *Carmen* which she had written for her, and in which she appeared with small success at the Gaiety Theatre last summer. If it is true, as American papers say, that Miss Nethersole considers the British public "highly inartistic and unappreciative," it seems a pity that so clever an actress should have so misread the lesson she had to learn over this unfortunate play. She will probably produce in Boston Mr. Esmond's *My Lady Virtue*. As we announced long ago, she has also acquired the rights of *When Greek meets Greek*, Mr. Joseph Hatton's drama.

Les Deux Gosses has been successfully produced by Mr. Charles Frohman at the Boston Museum.

George Eliot's *Romola* has at last been dramatised. Mr. Elwyn A. Barron is the author of the adaptation, which was first produced at Milwaukee last month by Mr. Robert Taber, who himself undertook the part of Tito Milema. Miss Julia Marlowe-Taber appeared as Romola, and two well-known actors, Mr. Bassett Roe and Mr. G. W. Anson, played respectively Bardo Bardi and Calvo Baldassore.

Mr. J. M. Barrie, who is now in America, will, it is stated, superintend there the production of the much-talked-of dramatic version of *The Little Minister*.

Mr. Austin Brereton has returned from New York to London.

The plea put forward in the *Musical Age* for the encouragement of music in America, as interpreted by native musicians, continues to arouse much discussion in the papers there. After all, the question at issue is simply one of demand and supply. If America could produce a Patti or a

Jean de Reszke, the presumption is that Patti or Jean de Reszke would not command such high salaries as they have done on the other side of the Atlantic. "America for Americans" by all means if she wishes it; meanwhile, however, she may learn a little from Europe in the way of singing, and may gratify a wholesome catholicity of taste. On the warmth of the welcome extended to American artists on this side of the world it would be quite superfluous to dwell.

One of the worst abuses that have crept into inferior American journalism is being sternly exposed in New York by the *Dramatic Mirror*, the *Spirit of the Times*, and other papers alive to the dignity of a great profession. Not a few newspapers pay their critics by commission upon theatrical advertisements; some theatres employ critics as press agents. One writer, we are assured, submits his "criticisms" upon the productions of a certain management for its approval before publication. "In all these circumstances," the *Mirror* asks, "is it strange that dramatic criticism in New York is looked at askance by the profession and ridiculed by the playgoing public?"

The poor quality of the "musical play" is not only complained of in this country. The *Musical Record* of Boston, writing on this subject in a recent number, says:—"It is melancholy that comic opera in general in this country has degenerated into a form of entertainment scarcely on an intellectual par with old-fashioned burlesque. This is partly the fault of the actors entrusted with the humorous *rôles*, and partly the fault of the public which encourages these comedians in any excess of horseplay or buffoonery. One cannot easily foresee the drifts and eddies of public taste but it is not altogether improbable that at no very distant day there will be a reaction in favour of comic opera interpreted by artists of discretion and refinement." We hope this Bostonian forecast will prove correct in America, and equally do we hope that before long we may see a return to the better traditions of the light operatic stage in England.

THE THEATRE.

DECEMBER, 1896.

Our Watch Tower.

NASTINESS ON THE STAGE.

IF the many pleasing proofs of the gradual renascence of dramatic art among us there is none more gratifying than the manner in which, during the past ten years, the English stage has freed itself from the dishonouring thraldom of the French. Even now it requires no great effort of memory to recall the day when our theatres were flooded with adaptations of Parisian novelties, while managers, heedless of the claims of native writers, were constantly on the alert to replenish their stock from foreign sources. That nothing good could come out of England had become with them almost a shibboleth, and as the feeling spread, the competition to secure French plays increased proportionately. The result of such a policy was, as might easily have been foreseen, disastrous to all concerned. Inflated with a sense of their own importance, foreign dramatists hastened to raise their pretensions to such a point as to leave English managers only the barest margin for profit. Nor did the evil end here. Eager to share in so simple and advantageous a business, outside speculators rushed headlong in, never pausing to consider the quality of the goods purchased, and cheating themselves with the belief that somehow or other they could easily be rendered fit for home consumption. Then came the crash, and these daring gentlemen deservedly found themselves left with a bulky packet of manuscripts, representing a solid sum of current coin, and with no market for their dearly-acquired merchandise. Meanwhile a new school of playwrights, had slowly been making its influence felt. Mr. Pinero, Mr. Jones,

Mr. Grundy, and Mr. Carton, not to mention others, had arisen to prove that they could write farces, comedies, and dramas of which the workmanship was in no sense inferior to that of French authors, and in which nothing could be detected to offend even the most exacting or modest listener.

But just as every true lover of the theatre was congratulating himself on this happy condition of things there has come a pause. For ourselves, we earnestly hope and confidently believe that it is merely momentary; that the good taste and shrewd commonsense of the public will speedily assert themselves once more. For we do not hesitate to say that, if they fail to do so, the prospects of the English stage must materially suffer. There is no need to beat about the bush. Of late we have had to record the production of several adaptations of French farces, of a kind which, we had begun to flatter ourselves, had altogether ceased to find a footing on the English stage. To analyse these separately would be a task for which we have neither space nor inclination, and one, moreover, that our readers would scarcely be grateful to us for undertaking. But in order to justify the title of this article, it is necessary that we should offer some proof in support of the allegation contained in it; and, although we are almost constrained to apologise for so doing, we select one incident by way of example, culled from a farce belonging to the class indicated. The hero of this precious piece is, then, a gentleman who has hit upon the happy device of throwing his wife into a hypnotic trance, in order that he may utilise the occasion to carry on his flirtations with other ladies. During one of his absences she is visited by an old admirer, who, after wakening her, proceeds to make furious love. In this way she discovers the truth regarding her husband's misdoings, and, anxious to revenge herself, makes him believe that while in an unconscious state she has been seduced by an unknown intruder. The discovery of a waistcoat buckle on the balcony leads the husband to conclude that a dirty, ill-bred gardener is his wife's betrayer, and accordingly he taxes him with the offence. Could any situation be more filthy, more abominable, or more nauseous than this? Conceive an English lady imagining such a device; conceive her confessing it to her husband; conceive him face to face with this unwashed, mean, ill-favoured creature whom he believes on her own word to be his wife's seducer. The whole thing reeks of the gutter.

Honestly, we should like to believe that the person primarily responsible for placing such an incident before the public had not fully realised the significance of the step. Somehow there seems to be an impression abroad that in farce much is admissible

which in serious drama would be pronounced indefensible. The theory is one that, in our judgment, no fair-minded man would venture to maintain. The object of tragedy is to deal with the deeper passions that sway mankind, and with the disastrous results that spring from their misuse. In order to point his moral, it is, in such circumstances, imperative that the playwright should draw his material from sources of which it is the custom politely to ignore rather than strenuously to deny the existence. But this he does at his own risk, and with the consciousness that, should he fail to make good his position, the verdict must inevitably go against him, and with it the punishment meted out to misapplied energy. On the other hand, the aim of farce is to afford amusement, not necessarily of a highly intellectual order, but at least of a clean, wholesome, and healthy description. The manager who endeavours to win popularity, or, to employ a more fitting word, notoriety, by means less worthy must not complain, therefore, if, while awakening the laughter of the vacuous and the prurient spectator, he draws down upon himself the indignation and the contempt of all those who have the best interests of the stage at heart. Mistakes will occur even in the best regulated theatres, and we should be loth to pronounce wholesale condemnation upon anyone by reason of a single offence. But there is at least one way by which such a fault can be atoned for, and that is through the immediate withdrawal of a piece that makes so clearly for evil. In a case of the kind, mere pecuniary loss, Utopian as the idea may appear to some, should be the last consideration; for what a manager might suffer pecuniarily by the adoption of such a measure would be more than counterbalanced by an added sense of self-respect, coupled with the public esteem and applause which the ready acknowledgment of his mistake would indubitably bring him.

There is, however, another and an even more serious side to the question, which involves grave consideration of the part played by Mr. Redford in the matter. Whether the existence of a Licenser of Plays makes for good or evil is a question we are not concerned to discuss for the moment. But regarding one thing we have not the slightest doubt. So long as the appointment remains in force, so long as the authority attached to such a position is vested in one man, it is to be expected, nay more, it is absolutely imperative, that he shall exercise his power justly, wisely, and fearlessly. By virtue of his office Mr. Redford becomes the guardian of public morals so far as the stage is concerned; his rule is undisputed, there is no appeal from his decisions. But if he is to win public opinion to his side, if he is to make himself and his position respected,

there must be no derogation of duty, no trifling with things unclean. Mr. Redford is on his trial; and let him clearly understand that, although for a time he may wrap himself in a mantle of impenetrability, and refuse to break the silence he has hitherto preserved, public feeling will in the end prove too strong for him. Sooner or later he must emerge into the open, or see himself and his office completely swept away. If he has not the strength of mind or the capacity to bear its responsibilities he ought never to have accepted the position. We certainly should be the last to pay him so poor a compliment as to speak of his post as a sinecure, or of himself as a mere figure-head. The simple fact of his existence is in itself a sufficient proof that the law believes in the possibility of dramatists writing and managers producing plays containing matter constituting an offence against public morals. Personally we are reluctantly compelled to confess, with certain recent experiences in mind, that in so thinking the law is not altogether mistaken. But what is to be thought of a censor who stamps such things with the hall-mark of his approval, and who raises no objection to an incident of the kind we have described? Whether the circumstance is the result of ignorance or of carelessness it is none of our business to inquire. Enough that the fact remains, and inevitably suggests the moral that if Mr. Redford does not speedily waken to a proper sense of his responsibilities he may unexpectedly find them, and that at no very distant date, transferred to other and to stronger shoulders.

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MISS ELLIS JEFFREYS.

Portraits.

MISS ELLIS JEFFREYS.

THE production of *His Little Dodge* at the Royalty has at any rate done good service in one respect. It has shown how admirably Miss Ellis Jeffreys can play in light comedy, and revealed another side to the talents she has evinced in so many directions. Having studied music before she thought of becoming an actress and beginning her stage career in comic opera—her first engagement was at the Lyric Theatre, during the run of *La Cigale*—she made so much impression upon Mr. Wyndham in a burlesque of *The Dancing Girl* that she soon became a member of the Criterion company. In *The Bauble Shop* she was the society young woman with a fondness for music hall songs, and in this part she made her first decided success. There was not very much in it, perhaps; but Miss Jeffreys managed to give individuality to the character, and her "song and dance" seldom failed to "bring down the house." Melodrama at the Adelphi and farce at Terry's—the pieces, *The Two Orphans* and *The Foundling*—gave much-needed experience in different styles, and when *The Notorious Mrs. Ebbsmith* was produced at the Garrick last year, Mr. Hare decided to entrust to Miss Jeffreys the difficult part of Mrs. Thorpe. It was an experiment, and it succeeded. To act as foil to Mrs. Patrick Campbell, to play the "good woman" without making her a prude and losing the sympathy that rightly attached to the character—this was no light task. Miss Jeffreys managed to strike the right note, and her Mrs. Thorpe was one of the most successful pieces of acting in this curiously unequal play. With Mr. Hare she went to America, but was unfortunately ill almost the whole time—so ill, indeed, that her life was in grave danger. But death is no match for an Irishwoman determined to live, and in the early autumn of the year she was again at work playing Antoinette de Mauban in *The Prisoner of Zenda* until she moved to the Royalty to take up the part she is now playing so well. No doubt she will be seen in some of the Shaksperean revivals which Mr. Alexander is undertaking and will have the opportunity of trying her wings in the poetic drama. So far she has done everything well, and she may prove herself equally clever in ways as yet untried. Miss Ellis Jeffreys is known in private life as the Hon. Mrs. Curzon, being married to the second son of Earl Howe.

The Round Table.

THE FIRST PRODUCTION OF *THE BELLS*.

By Frederick Hawkins.

ON November 25th, a day or two after the appearance of the present number of *The Theatre*, the first of several special performances of *The Bells* will be given by Sir Henry Irving at the Lyceum in commemoration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the original production of that play. For many of us the event is one of peculiar interest. *The Bells* marked a turning point in the career of a brilliant actor, and may be said to have opened an important chapter in the history of the English stage itself. It is not quite the fact, as some of the rising generation of play-goers have assumed, that Sir Henry Irving, as Mathias, flashed like a meteor out of the theatrical firmament. During the previous five years he had acquired a strong hold of the London stage, especially by his Doricourt in *The Belle's Stratagem*, Rawdon Scudamore in *Hunted Down*, Bob Gassitt in *Dearer than Life*, Bill Sikes in *Oliver Twist*, Robert Redburn in *The Lancashire Lass*, Harry Dornton in *The Road to Ruin*, Mr. Chevenix in *Uncle Dick's Darling*, and, above all, Digby Grant in *The Two Roses*. He had taught not a few—I venture, at the risk of being called wise after the event, to claim a place among them—to expect great things from him in the near future. Charles Dickens foresaw his pre-eminence; Mrs. Sartoris, Charles Kemble's daughter, said that he reminded her vividly of the most famous members of her family; Mrs. Frank Matthews, in answer to a disparaging remark at Miss Herbert's table concerning him, agreed with Carlyle that there were a good many fools in the world. But to distinguish himself in comedy and melodrama was not enough for Mr. Irving. His sympathies really lay with the tragic and the romantic drama. Years before, at Manchester, he had realised one of the dreams of his boyhood by appearing as Hamlet, and had won the

plaudits of one of the most exacting audiences in the kingdom. Unfortunately, however, the tragic and the romantic had temporarily gone out of fashion in London. The lighter forms of entertainment, notably opéra-bouffe, reigned supreme. In the words of Mr. Chatterton, as set down for him by Charles Kenney, Shakspere spelt ruin and Byron bankruptcy. Could the public be impressed by a serious theme? In order to settle this point, Mr. Irving recited the "Dream of Eugene Aram" in a benefit performance at the Vaudeville, and the roar of acclamation that greeted him at the end could not have failed to inspire him with new hope and confidence.

His opportunity soon came. Leopold Lewis, a solicitor in Finsbury-square, but fonder of the theatre than of his profession, wrote for him an adaptation, under the title of *The Bells*, of Erckmann-Chatrian's *Juif Polonais*, already dramatised for the Théâtre Cluny. He readily accepted it, and the two spent many pleasant afternoons together in talking over the details. By that time the long unlucky Lyceum had been taken by Mr. Bateman, who offered him an engagement. He went there, possibly in the belief that he would have a chance of getting the play produced. Meanwhile, much to his consternation, another version of *Le Juif Polonais* was given at the Marylebone Theatre, where, however, it created little or no effect. It has often been asserted that Mr. Bateman, struck by the force the young actor had shown, attracted him to the Lyceum in order to provide him with fitting parts. This was not the case; Mr. Irving was engaged simply to support Miss Isabel Bateman and Mr. George Belmore, and that at a salary which the typical *jeune premier* of the present hour would scornfully refuse. Mr. Bateman's management was anything but prosperous. In a few weeks, "heartily sick of this infernal country," he determined to return to America. Mr. Irving then asked that *The Bells* might have a trial. The manager shook his head. He "did not believe in the piece. It had failed elsewhere. He was not eager for new experiments." Eventually he gave way, but only on the condition, it is understood, that the actor bore a portion of the cost.

November 25th, 1871, was the night set apart for the performance so anxiously expected by at least one person. In those days, though very young, I had the privilege of assisting Mr. Oxenford, the keenest and most erudite of dramatic critics, in his work. On the evening in question I dined with him at his favourite haunt, the Junior Garrick Club, at the eastern corner of Adelphi-terrace. "Are you engaged to-night?" he asked. "No," I answered. "I should be very much obliged to you," he said, "if

you would look in at the Adelphi for me. First performance of a piece by the late lamented Tom Parry. Webster likes it, and has got me to rub it up a little. I should like to know how it is acted and how it goes off." I at once complied, if with a slight feeling of disappointment that I was not to be with him elsewhere. "Of course," I said, "you are going to the Lyceum for *The Bells?*" "Yes," he replied. "A weird, strange sort of piece. Irving, however, is probably safe enough. His recitation of 'Eugene Aram' leaves but little doubt about that. I hope it is all right; if it is a failure, I am told, the theatre will be closed in bankruptcy on Monday." I went to the Adelphi, took notes of the performance of the late lamented Tom Parry's play, and returned to the club in the expectation that Oxenford would be there for a few minutes. It is no exaggeration to say that nothing was talked of over the supper table except the profound impression Mr. Irving's Mathias had made. By a large majority it was regarded as a genuine surprise, a great creation, as a proof that the long-desired tragic actor had at length come forward.

I called upon Oxenford the next day—he was then living in Westbourne-park—and found him full of the "signal revelation" he had witnessed on the previous night. At that moment he was finishing his critique for *The Times* of the play. Contrary to his custom, he had begun by referring to the acting, certainly a significant fact. "We find," he wrote, "a very difficult task very creditably executed in the performance of Mr. H. Irving as the chief personage in an English version of *Le Juif Polonais*, produced on Saturday at the Lyceum with an extraordinary success, to which he in a great measure contributed. As a valuable actor, especially of bad men in good society, Mr. Irving has for some years been recognised by the London public, and his Digby Grant is perhaps one of the best remembered parts in Mr. Albery's *Two Roses*. But when he appears as a tragic artist, with the duty of sustaining a serious drama single-handed, he may almost be said to make a *début*. Decidedly the full measure of his deserts was never known until Saturday night." After an analysis of the story he goes on:—"It will be obvious to every reader that the efficiency of this singular play depends almost wholly upon the actor who represents Mathias. To this one part all the others are subordinate; and while it is most grateful to an artist who can appreciate and grapple with its difficulties, it would altogether crush an aspirant whose ambition was disproportionate to his talent. But, remarkable for the strength of his physique, Mr. Irving has thrown the whole force of his mind into the character, and works out bit by bit the concluding hours of a life passed in a constant

effort to preserve a cheerful exterior with a conscience tortured till it has become a monomania. It is a marked peculiarity of the moral position of Mathias that he has no confidant, that he is not subjected to the extortions of some mercenary wretch who would profit by his knowledge. He is at once in two worlds between which there is no link—an outer world that is ever smiling, an inner world which is a purgatory. Hence a dreaminess in his manner, which Mr. Irving accurately represents in his frequent transitions from a display of the domestic affections to the fearful work of self-communion. In the dream his position is changed. The outer world is gone, and conscience is all triumphant, assisted by an imagination which violently brings together the anticipated terrors of a criminal court and the mesmeric feats he has recently witnessed. The struggles of the miserable culprit, convinced that all is lost, but desperately fighting against hope, rebelling against the judges, protesting against the clairvoyant who wrings his secret from him, are depicted by Mr. Irving with a degree of energy that, fully realising the horror of the situation, seems to hold the audience in suspense. It was not till the curtain fell, and they summoned the actor before it with a storm of acclamation, that they seemed to recover their self-possession."

Oxenford had scarcely put down his pen when a messenger came in. "Don't trouble yourself about it," I said: "I am going that way, and will take the copy myself." And take it I did, tapping my breast pocket now and then to be sure that all was safe. The other papers were no less eulogistic, with what result I need not say. Before many days had passed the generally half-deserted Lyceum was crowded; the manager's astonishment at his unexpected success equalled his delight, and Mr. Irving, after fourteen years' hard and self-denying work, at length found the ball at his foot.

THE "TOO-PREVIOUS" PARAGRAPH.

By A Journalist.

NOTHING is more characteristic of the journalism of to-day than the considerable space accorded by the editors of the daily and the weekly papers to the record and discussion of things theatrical. Not only are the notices of new plays for the most part full to the point of elaborateness; not only do such notices run sometimes to the extent of a column and more—there is scarcely a newspaper or a miscellany which does not include

among its attractions a weekly or twice-weekly budget of news or gossip about the theatre. There could be no more significant testimony to the very great interest taken by the public in the stage and all connected with it. Space in daily and weekly journals is valuable, and editors do not devote any part of it to subjects which have no attraction for their readers. Clearly these theatrical *chroniques* and *causeries* are liked and called for, or they would not be supplied. Moreover, they are, in most cases, exceedingly well done. In London the majority are provided by men of known learning, ability, and discretion. Justly authoritative, as well as eminently readable, is the budget of talk on theatrical matters which we find in such morning papers as the *News* and the *Chronicle*, such evening papers as the *Globe* and the *St. James's Gazette*, and such weekly papers as the *Observer* and the *Referee*. These, and others which could readily be named, keep the public not only interested but informed, dealing legitimately with legitimate topics, and supplying news which is admissible and comment which is fair.

Unhappily, the system, while as a whole good for the stage, has its inevitable drawbacks. The number of *chroniques* and *causeries* being so large, it can hardly be expected that they shall all be equally learned, able, and discreet. The last-named quality, in particular, is apt, now and then, to be conspicuous by its absence. There are sometimes knowledge and ability without tact. Sometimes the *chroniqueur* is young, with the hastiness and thoughtlessness of youth; sometimes the *causeur* is obscure, with the sense of irresponsibility that unimportance frequently creates. It is not to be supposed, with so many men—and women—writing gossip about the theatre, that all of it shall be on the same high plane of good taste and good judgment. There is, to begin with, the demoralising effect of competition—the desire to be first in the field, to outdo one's brethren. This is not entertained by the leading theatrical "gossipers," who are the recipients, from all sides, of more information than they know how to communicate; but it does to a certain extent animate the breasts of those who, in general, have to go in search of their pabulum, and trip over each other's heels on the same errand. When columns have to be filled, means must be taken to fill them. When times are dull, news is not readily to be obtained. The more successful a management, the less opportunity it affords for chit-chat.

Happy, it is said, is the nation which has no history; happy, too, you would think, is the theatre which is so prosperous that it needs not to be written about. But of that we cannot be so sure. The craving for "news," once ministered to, has

to be perpetually satisfied. The great public calls for "more." If nothing is going on, there is a temptation to draw on the imagination. Intentions are attributed to managers which those managers have never harboured; combinations are suggested which were never contemplated. Worse still, the actual plans of managers are revealed prematurely. This, though it may not seem so at first sight, is worse even than invention. If a production is "going strong," and is suggestive absolutely of no "copy," the gossiper, in his anxiety to please his patrons, the many-headed, boldly looks ahead, and chatters about the production which will, or may, follow the existing triumph. If the manager himself has taken the playgoing world into his confidence—and occasionally he thinks it prudent so to do—the *causeur* is not to be blamed very greatly if on that hint he speaks. But if the manager has sedulously kept his own counsel, and exhorted all around him to do the same, what right has any publicist to make the matter the subject of comment in print? "Too-previous," indeed, is the paragraph which divulges an *entrepreneur's* schemes without his permission. It is a gross violation of the proprieties—as gross a violation as if the journalist had blared abroad the coming arrangements of a merchant or a speculator. There is a sense in which every theatrical lessee is a tradesman; and why should a tradesman be impeded in his business by the "too-previous" paragraph?

Of course, it is easy to see how that species of paragraph comes to be penned and published. Some managers and some journalists are on terms of personal intimacy. Some actors and some journalists meet each other day by day in club smoking-rooms, and (alas that it should be so!) at drinking bars. The managers, probably, do not impart to the journalists more than they are willing to see published, or, if they do impart more, know they have only to enjoin silence, and it will be maintained. Many and many are the things which the leading *causeurs* know, but which they have been requested not to put in print, and do not put there. In this respect, and to this extent, the more conscientious the theatrical gossiper, the more heavily is he weighted in the pursuance of his calling. The less scrupulous are less severely hampered. Their opportunities are many and great. A manager can keep his own counsel, but not so the average player, working "on" his or her "own." From the actor or actress (save of the highest rank) who has just signed a desirable engagement, how can reticence be looked for? Is it surprising that such engagements (and all that they imply) "leak out"? The manager who has given the engagement may suffer; but how many players stop to think of that? Most think only of themselves, and it is

not unnatural. Thus do contemplated productions obtain "too-previous" publicity; the players, when they have got a new part, cannot contain themselves, they must be talking.

When a new piece is in rehearsal, there is obviously still less likelihood that secrets will be kept. The fact of the rehearsing is known at once; and then comes the opportunity of the more enterprising *causeur*. The cast of the piece is instantly ascertained and published. After that follows a series of paragraphs, each of them giving to the world some small detail about the scope and characterisation of the play. Sometimes the facts for these paragraphs are communicated spontaneously by the author, for some dramatic scribes are busy advertisers. More often the information is obtained direct from the more accessible, more garrulous members of the company. When once a piece is in preparation, there is not much that can be withheld from the persistent quidnunc. Some of the confidences are made with a sense of the favours to come in return for them; there are players who do not hesitate to "feed with soft *information* all day long" the persons whose business it may be to sit in judgment upon them on "the critical bench." Usually, when the time for criticism comes, the benefaction is ignored; but still the "news" flows in, and still the "too-previous" paragraph appears. The professional interviewer, of course, is responsible for a good deal; numberless are the indiscretions which they encourage and repeat. The players tell them not only of their *rôles*, but what they think of them, and of the prospects of the play in which they are to figure. Amazing are the things which an actress (especially) will chatter about in the privacy of her boudoir. The interviewer may be sworn to secrecy; but what of that? Too often he is the journalist first, and the gentleman a long way after.

And if it is easy to see how the "too-previous" paragraph comes to be printed, it is at least equally easy to conceive how much damage it may do to a theatrical enterprise. It is not always desirable to ask the public to peer too far into the future. If a theatre is closed, curiosity as to its next programme may properly and usefully be excited; the more attention that can be drawn, legitimately, to that programme the better; every paragraph in that case becomes an advertisement, keeping alive the name of the play-house and the approaching play. On the other hand, so long as a piece is running at a theatre, speculations or details as to its successor are apt to do very much more harm than good. They suggest instability, if not failure. They suggest that the current attraction cannot be very potent, or the question of its successor would not be raised. And that is where the paragraphist is likely

to come into collision with the interests of the manager. A play once produced, the theatrical *causeur* has virtually done with it—unless, indeed, it be one of those nondescript, go-as-you-please pieces in which alterations are being made nightly. Then there is always pabulum for "copy." But, in general, the gossiper has his eye fixed upon the "sweet by-and-bye," however much the manager may be gratified by the existent.

What the paragraphist, *quâ* paragraphist, likes best is not a success but a failure. The latter brings more "matter" than the former. It opens out a long vista of particulars about this and that. And here again the *causeur* finds himself at loggerheads with the *entrepreneur*. What is the limit to be assigned to gossip about a production "on the stocks?" How much may be judiciously and effectively revealed? It is quite true that on the morning after a production everything will be known to the public, from the most trivial incident in the plot to the minutest detail of the costumes. Nevertheless, that is no reason why those incidents and details should be gradually "given away" beforehand. Of a play described thus to it, bit by bit, the public is inclined to weary. The preliminary paragraph is all very well, but care should be taken that it is not *too* "previous." Paragraphing, from the managerial point of view, is an art, and it is a pity that the managers cannot practise it themselves. The result, in the hands of competent practitioners, would be "good business" for the playhouses. As it is, everything is not well. The press gives ample publicity to the theatre, and, so far, the theatre is its debtor. But sometimes the publicity accorded is overdone. How is the evil to be eradicated? The question is more readily put than answered. The most "previous" paragraphist means no harm; at the worst his sin is an indiscretion, the outcome of inexperience or over-eagerness. Usually he has the best interests of the stage at heart, and, like Werther in the case of Charlotte, "would do nothing for to hurt her."

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON AND THE DRAMA.

By Malcolm Watson.

WE are all so fond of congratulating ourselves upon the wonderful progress made by the drama during the past twenty years, and the remarkable manner in which the stage now holds the mirror up to nature, that to encounter anything tending to suggest the contrary is apt to provoke something in the nature of a severe mental shock. Can it be, we are moved

to ask ourselves, that Ibsen after all has lived in vain, that Dumas has endeavoured to no purpose to lay bare the secret workings of the human heart, and Pinero striven ineffectually to probe the soul of a *Second Mrs. Tanqueray* or a *Notorious Mrs. Ebbsmith*? A twelvemonth ago the question would probably have received an emphatic answer in the negative; to-day it would, almost certainly, elicit a reply of a much more doubtful kind. Nor in the circumstance is there matter for any great surprise. The current of theatrical taste, so far as breadth and profundity are concerned, changes as rapidly and as decisively as the current of a mighty river, which at one moment dashes with headlong force between the lofty cliffs of a narrow passage, only at another to widen out into the semblance of a sluggish lake. Such transitions are clearly to be expected—are indeed quite in the common order of things. Nevertheless, it is always possible to gauge in more or less accurate fashion the measure of progress accomplished during any given time as compared with that achieved in some previous period of equal duration. Thus, contrasting 1896 with, let us say, 1876, there can hardly be any doubt with which the advantage lies. But granting that in these days we have reached a level of realistic endeavour—and by the phrase I do not mean simply effects of stage and scenic realism, but also of that realism which concerns the brain and heart of human beings—how comes it that the theatre is still found to appeal almost in vain to the really intellectual classes? A short time ago Mr. George Bernard Shaw informed us that for all the interest which William Morris took in it the theatre might have been non-existent, and it is not difficult to believe that in this respect the author of *The Earthly Paradise* stood by no means alone.

And now in the *Vailima Letters* I find this grave and formal indictment by Robert Louis Stevenson. "No, I will not write a play for Irving, nor for the devil. Can you not see that the work of *falsification* which a play demands is, of all tasks, the most ungrateful?" Such, it has to be remembered, is the deliberate statement of a man who had tried most forms of literature; alike as poet, essayist, novelist, and playwright. Nor can it be considered the mere outcome of unsatisfied ambition. In Stevenson's nature there was nothing mean or paltry. He knew better than anyone and was always the readiest to acknowledge his own limitations. You have only to read those Vailima Letters to discover how he groaned and laboured over his work, polishing and re-polishing every sentence, and how, again and again, the overwhelming feeling of despair that he would never reach the altitude of artistic excellence at which he aimed finds

expression. For such a man the mere personal recognition of failure had no terrors, or was at any rate fraught with no feeling of shame. God had endowed him with certain gifts. Provided he could convince himself that he had used them to the best of his ability, there was nothing more to be said. Stevenson's work, as the work of every true artist must infallibly be, was simply the expression of his own individuality, aided and abetted by experience. Yet, when he turns to the theatre, when he endeavours to write a drama, observe the result, recorded in his own words: "Can you not see that the work of *falsification* which a play demands is of all tasks the most ungrateful?" What is the real interpretation of this reproach? Simply, that the awful term "theatricality," the bane and ruin of all genuine dramatic impulse, was, when he presented himself manuscript in hand, hurled with needless violence into his face. For even among the best and most advanced London managers of to-day, there is not, it may safely be asserted, one sufficiently daring to erase it from his dictionary and set the word "nature" in its place. So, sick at heart and bruised by a feeling of unmerited neglect, this great writer of romances turned away from the stage, which, under happier auspices, he might have helped enormously to raise and illumine by the vital force of his wonderful genius.

That, then, is what I take Stevenson to mean when he used the word *falsification*. Altogether he has given to the world something less than half-a-dozen plays, written alone or in collaboration. In each, or almost every case, the merits far transcend the defects. Of any aptitude for stage-trickery, Stevenson was, of course, entirely innocent, but he possessed the knack in a high degree of touching the listener's heart by a word or a suggestion. One thing he had still to learn, namely, that the stage is, and must necessarily be, ruled by certain conventions, the observance of which, however, does not in itself imply the falsification of character or of motive. It is, indeed, conceivable that had he set himself patiently to master, and, if I may use an antithesis more apparent than real, mould his talent into submission to these, he would in time have produced a play at once a triumph of naturalness, and a splendid example of dramatic construction. But this, alas, was not to be. The circumstance is the more to be regretted inasmuch as one real success on the stage would have furnished him with ample means to take life more easily, and have saved him from the grinding necessity of undertaking work, more or less distasteful as his letters show, and which constantly prevented him from concentrating his energies on the more congenial task of novel writing.

I have used the term "theatricality" as a synonym for, or rather as the interpretation of, Stevenson's expression, "falsification." It was this obviously which forced him to shake the dust of the theatre off his feet; and yet, strange to say, it is this very element that every manager appears to consider an essential ingredient in the composition of a play. I am speaking of what I know, of what has been declared to me not once, but often, by some of the leading spirits in the profession. "To be effective you must be theatrical," is the recognised shibboleth. "Be as dramatic as you will," I would retort, "but never 'theatrical.'" It is the absence in Ibsen of the latter quality that has won for him a reputation which, however much you may be disposed to quarrel with his choice of subject-matter, deserves the fullest recognition. Ibsen's influence upon contemporary writers has in this respect made entirely for righteousness, and it will be a thousand pities should the present reviving taste for romantic drama serve in any way to weaken it. We have already made, just as when the moment arrives for another change of vogue we shall again make, distinct progress along the ascending path. But that we are still far from the highest point is clearly proved by the fact that it was possible for a man like Stevenson to pen these words: "No, I will not write a play for Irving, nor for the devil."

THE ANGLICISATION OF THE AMERICAN STAGE.

By Austin Brereton.

THE American stage, judged from a financial standpoint, is in a particularly prosperous condition at the present time. The Presidential campaign, far from injuring the theatre, had a contrary effect. The New York playhouses, which were opened this season much sooner that is customary, together with the travelling companies, which started out this autumn considerably in advance of the usual time, have been attended with remarkable success. The two most fashionable theatres of New York, the Empire and the Lyceum, the first named with *Rosemary*, the latter with another serious play, written by an almost unknown American author, have drawn the public beyond even the most sanguine expectations of the managers. It is my belief that Mr. Hare, already most highly regarded by the better class of

American playgoers, will meet with continued appreciation throughout his present tour. Mr. Willard will doubtless renew his old popularity; Mr. Beerbohm-Tree will also be accorded a warm welcome; and Miss Nethersole and Mr. Bourchier will not fail to obtain just recognition. The stock company of the Empire Theatre, playing the recent works of Mr. Jones, Mr. Grundy, Mr. Chambers, and Mr. Carton, is reaping a golden harvest in the larger cities out of New York. Mr. Mansfield fills the treasury wherever he plays; Mr. Jefferson, Miss Rehan, and other stars are making money. It would be an easy but an unnecessary task to give a host of details in regard to the commercial prosperity of the stage proper in the United States at the moment. I doubt, indeed, whether the drama has ever met with wider recognition in America than during this season. As for the farce, comic opera, and extravaganza stage, not to mention the large music halls of New York, there is a ready public for anything that is good in these directions.

I am, however, more particularly concerned with the dramatic stage, and that, as I have shown, is flourishing in the monetary sense. Therefore it may be assumed that there is nothing to be complained of in regard to the artistic state of affairs. The good, sound, and oftentimes clever work now to be seen on the American stage is fully appreciated by the public. Of that there is not the shadow of a doubt. A good play, and good acting, cannot fail in the United States at the present day. The theatre-going public of America is not only enormous and enthusiastic; it is discriminating. It will not have bad plays or indifferent acting. That, in a word, is the exact condition of things. Here we have beautiful theatres, the best in the world for convenience, comfort, and elegance, and an audience ever eager to fill them. But, for all that, there is no American drama. The American theatrical market is supplied to a vast extent by England. English companies and English plays predominate in America, to the exclusion of the native element. The American dramatist, so far as any ambitious work is concerned, no longer exists. Mr. Bronson Howard, whose *Banker's Daughter*, produced by Mr. A. M. Palmer, the *doyen* of American theatrical managers, at the Union Square Theatre, New York, in 1878, and represented, during the management of Mr. Wilson Barrett, under the title of *The Old Love and the New*, at the Court Theatre, in the following year, has retired upon his laurels. And yet the author of this piece, of *Brighton*, *Truth*, and other plays most favourably known in England, has clearly demonstrated that he possesses, in great degree, the dramatic faculty. But he has been strangely silent of late years. Another American dramatist, who has done

much good work in his way, Mr. Henry Guy Carleton, contents himself with pretty but slight comedies. Mr. Paul M. Potter is more celebrated for his adaptations than for his original work—a remark which aptly applies to the few other serious playwrights in America. Yet, when a serious attempt is made by the native writer, the same encouragement awaits it as though it were a tried play fresh from London. Witness, for instance, the success of Mr. David Belasco's drama, *The Heart of Maryland*, a stirring work, which I make bold to say, would be successful in England, if rightly interpreted, although it is founded on a highly-coloured framework of the Civil War. Not only is it cleverly constructed, but, more important to note, it is human.

The absence of the American dramatist is the more to be wondered at and deplored when it is considered that in the everyday life of the people, with its prevailing youth, its restless and resistless activity, its immense vitality, its love of adventure, its ambition, its struggle—now subdued, but gathering strength year by year and ever ready to break forth—of class against class, and, it must be added, its occasional recklessness, there is ample material for a national drama. But he who is to mirror on the stage the life of the people has not yet arrived. America takes all our plays, but gives us none in return. So it is with the actors. There are half a dozen important companies, made up entirely of English actors, now appearing in America, despite the fact that Sir Henry Irving and Miss Terry, Mr. and Mrs. Kendal, and Mr. Wilson Barrett, who have all made fortunes in the States, are now in their own country. Mr. Henry Miller, for several seasons the leading man of the Empire company—the best organisation of its kind—is of English birth, although a naturalised American. Mr. Dodson, the character actor of the company, and one of its most popular members, is English. Mr. Sothern's company was recently praised by a New York paper for its excellence as a "distinctly American company," whereas it is nothing of the kind. Mr. Arthur R. Lawrence, an actor of unusual power and finish and wide experience, is English, as are Mr. Rowland Buckstone, Mr. Morton Selten, Miss Kate Pattison, and others. Mr. Sothern achieved the greatest success of his career in *The Prisoner of Zenda*, an English play, interpreted by an English company. Mr. Sothern's leading lady, Miss Virginia Harned, an actress of much charm and ability, and possessed of a most musical voice, is the only American of importance in the company. *Rosemary*, to be sure, is interpreted by an American company, although I think that there is a little English blood in Mr. John Drew, who has made an unexpected hit in Mr.

Wyndham's part, thereby astonishing those who had become so accustomed to seeing him as the hero of flimsy, or ultra-sentimental, comedy. Here let me praise in passing one of the most deservedly popular of young American actresses, Miss Maud Adams, who has won her way to the hearts of this great play-going people by the delicacy, the refinement of her manner, and a clever and pretty idea of comedy. I read that Miss Adams is to appear in London next season, supporting here, as in America, Mr. Drew. She is sure to be greatly admired for her graceful acting.

With English plays and English actors occupying so prominent a place on the American stage, it is little marvel that jealousy occasionally gives room for a display of anger on the part of the less successful of the American actors and their champions. This feeling, which is not shared by the public, is generally vented against the managers. The late Henry E. Abbey was frequently attacked for his importation of foreign actors, and yet the Irving influence in America has been of decided and permanent benefit to the stage of that country. Nor can a liberal-minded critic rightly blame a manager for presenting such artists as Madame Sarah Bernhardt, M. Mounet-Sully, M. Coquelin, Madame Hading, and Madame Réjane to his public. The present bugbear is Mr. Charles Frohman, who, with his brother, Mr. Daniel Frohman—Mr. Sothern's manager—and his partner, Mr. Al. Hayman, controls several theatres in New York, including the Empire, Garrick, and Garden, Mr. Hayman having direct control of the Knickerbocker, known until lately as Abbey's. These managers also rule, either directly or through others, principal theatres throughout the country, notably in Chicago, St. Louis, and San Francisco in the west, and Boston and Philadelphia in the east. They are thus enabled to make their own dates and terms—no mean advantages—and to shut out companies which they do not desire in their theatres. They possess, in effect, a monopoly, and, as they deal largely in what they consider the most profitable investments, which happen, for the time being, to be mostly English, they are accordingly rated as being commercial and unpatriotic. I cannot, however, see why they should be so abused.

The American playgoer demands the best plays and the best players obtainable, and the American manager supplies the demand to the utmost extent of his ability. If he depended upon American plays, he would be starved out. This is what has happened at Palmer's Theatre, the historic Wallack's, which is now practically what is called a combination house—that is to say, it is temporarily occupied by any available or fitting attrac-

tion. Mr. Palmer, nevertheless, has shown in the old days that he knows how to pick a good play and how to produce it. Again, the revered boards of Daly's Theatre in New York, like the stage of the same named playhouse in London, is occupied by—alas! that I should have to set it down—*The Geisha*. This sacrilege is sufficient to make the shades of Shakspere and Sheridan arise in their wrath, and entirely subdue Mr. Daly for his deed of defilement. But the manager has merely been wise in his time, and given the public what is wanted. Mr. Frohman is, I am sure, only too ready to purchase and produce all the American plays which are good, and to employ, in the future, as he has done in the past, any number of American actors. As a matter of fact, Mr. Frohman produces American plays every season, and he employs far more American actors than those from England, two facts frequently lost sight of by those who would detract from the insight and liberality with which he appeals to the public. Nor is that public fickle. The veteran and admirable actor, Mr. John S. Clarke, has lately been compelled to refuse a handsome offer to tempt him from his retirement in order that he might renew his old triumphs in America.

The American manager is not to blame for relying so much on the English authors. When the American dramatist arises, there will be plenty of room for him. Nay, more. He will receive a warm and spontaneous welcome, for the American people admire brains, and are always ready to accord tribute to the possessor of them.

STAGE PRODUCTION.

By John Hollingshead.

THERE is no theatrical parrot-cry more loud or persistent in its screeching than "Down with upholstery: upholstery smothers acting." Those who utter it have not the courage to go back to the Thespian cart, or the brutal and degrading conditions under which the Shaksperean plays were acted in the time of their author. It is not at all clear what such critics desire, as they fill their pages or their speeches with abuse of what exists, without suggesting their favourite substitute.

No background can spoil a good actor, though it may assist a bad one. A real actor, not a clothes-prop, may do justice to a character, and perform a stage-play at Stonehenge, on Salisbury Plain—a building that, in the matter of exits, would strike

a County Councillor as a model, though somewhat draughty; and the same actor would produce the same effect if he played in the middle of one of Messrs. Maple's showrooms. The boy, Edmund Kean, was the same at Bart'lemy Fair, with the two Careys—his brother and mother—looking on, and the canvas booth over his head, as he was in either of the patent theatres. Perhaps he was better? His disciple, Frederick Robson, was better at Hoxton and the Grecian than he was at the Olympic. They were as superior to their surroundings as Oliver Goldsmith was when he wrote his immortal book in a squalid garret.

The first stage-manager worthy of the name was Sir William Davenant. He invented scenery and theatrical effects; he was not afraid to put music into drama; he had an eye for costume, and for those who had to wear it. He got rid of effeminate boys, and put women in their places. From that moment the English stage became a natural, as well as a national, institution. If he wanted assistance as a ballet-master, he got it from his friend and patron, Charles II., who learnt his lesson at Versailles while visiting Louis XIV. The drama was never insular. It was not all roast beef and plum pudding. It took kindly to cookery, and was not impatient of "kickshaws."

An actor who had to dress, who had to wear a wig, who had to paint his face, and "make-up" his eyes, mouth, and eyebrows, who in nine cases out of ten had to pad his legs to supply the shortcomings of nature, was not likely to object to pretty pictures behind him or at the side of him, and took kindly to presentable tables, chairs, and couches on which he could write, sit, or loll at his ease. To use the critical slang of the day, did he feel that he was out of the picture, or that the picture was an encumbrance? On the contrary, did he not feel that sense of comfort and support that the actor always feels when he sees his "properties"—his right properties—before him? The property man may justify Proudhon's socialistic maxim that property is a theft (*le propriété c'est le vol*)—that is an affair for the management and the "treasury." The actor is satisfied, and this satisfaction extends to the audience. They get solid value for their money. The more spiritual value they know is safe. Their favourite actor in their favourite piece is on the stage, as duly advertised in bills and newspapers.

The art of stage decoration was not the creation of a year, or of a small number of years. It had to grow by degrees, in many cases without the assistance of great actors and great managers. These rulers of the boards were often endowed with genius, but not with artistic taste and managerial instinct. David Garrick is a notorious example of hide-bound conventionality.

He stood on the ancient ways, and was as full of precedents as a Lord Chief Justice. It was not for him to initiate stage reforms. He played Macbeth as his predecessors played it, with a result that is handed down unconsciously to eternal derision by a contemporary painter. The picture by Zoffany, which hangs over the coffee-room fireplace at the Garrick Club, is more cruel —unintentionally cruel—than a caricature by Pellegrini. There is our little Garrick, whose loose legs seem to be giving way under him, like a marionette suspended by a string which is a trifle too long. In his hand he holds a dagger, like the bone player of a nigger minstrel troupe. His Lady Macbeth, Mrs. Pritchard, a substantial, well-fed, not to say blouzy woman—as superior to hysteria in appearance as a Barclay and Perkins' drayman is to sentiment—towers a foot and more above him, copying his expression, and staring into vacancy, meriting the poetical sarcasm :—

"Pritchard's genteel, and Garrick six feet high !"

The only point in the picture which interests a modern is that Garrick's face (as in many other pictures) bears a close resemblance to the late Henry Howe's. Macbeth and Lady Macbeth are not reciting at an evening party, they are acting on the stage of Drury Lane Theatre (from which Garrick kept Mrs. Siddons as long as he lived), and they are dressed in Georgian court costume.

Of course the taste which selected these costumes regulated the production of the piece. That I may not be thought guilty of prejudice and partisanship, let me quote Oulton's *History of the Theatres of London*, describing the dramatic opening of the reconstructed Drury Lane Theatre, April 21st, 1793 :—

"On April the 21st the house opened for performance of dramatic pieces, to the great terror of the performers of the other house, who had not yet taken their benefits. The first dramatic exhibition was *Macbeth*, which, though one of Shakspere's well-known plays, was now attended with much novelty, owing to some very material alterations ; the scenes were all new, and the witches no longer wore mittens, plaited caps, laced aprons, red stomachers, ruffs, &c. (which was the dress of those *weird sisters* when Messrs. Beard, Champness, &c., represented them with Garrick's *Macbeth*), or any human garb, but appeared as preternatural beings, distinguishable only by the fellness of their purposes and the fatality of their delusions." This and other improvements in production were introduced by John Philip Kemble, who had a reforming predecessor in Macklin, another of Garrick's pet aversions. Macklin played Macbeth in something like Scotch costume during Lord Bute's administration, when

the Scotch were very unpopular, and, at one and the same time, showed his courage and artistic sense of propriety.

The outcry against upholstery began in Macready's time, when he gave the stage scenery painted by the leading artists of his day. The beautiful works of Stanfield, Roberts, and others were left to rot in Drury Lane, or to be painted over by inferior artists. When Charles Kean began his memorable and honourable career at the Princess's Theatre, and produced Shakspere with all the aids that archæology and artistic research could supply, he was attacked as a mere "cheque-book" manager, a "clothes-peg," and a "Wardour-street tragedian." He was a sensitive man, and lived this abuse down with difficulty; but his earnest and impassioned acting, and his character as a gentleman, earned him public popularity, in spite of his unromantic personality. Charles Calvert worked mostly in Manchester, on the same lines, and had the merits and defects of his model. He may have spent his considerable pantomime profits to glorify himself, once a year, in the name of Shakspere; but his work was elevated and good for the public, whatever motives may have originated it. He never made but one mistake in mounting his pieces. He bought a real gondola at Venice to "illustrate" his *Merchant of Venice*, which reached from one side of the Prince's stage to the other. Gondolas are very deceptive.

Stage "illustration" must, of course, be not only governed by taste, but by that unbending tyrant—the two-foot rule. When the Bancroft's produced *The School for Scandal* at their little band-box of a theatre in Tottenham-street, Tottenham-court-road, they forgot that the Prince of Wales's stage was not the stage of Covent Garden. The furniture of Lady Sneerwell's drawing-room had only one fault—it was four times as large as the limited boards could accommodate, to leave room for the free and unfettered movements of the actors. One central settee, in particular, was always in the way, and must have given rise to a good deal of dialogue that could not be found in the prompt book.

Mr. Hare, one of our best and most artistic stage managers, once made a mistake in mounting a comedy at the Court Theatre, which impaired, for a moment, his powers as an actor. He embellished a drawing-room scene with some valuable china which he brought from his own house, with the result that he thought more of the china and his careless "property-men," than he did of his author or his part.

"Realities" on the stage—real cabs, real pumps, and real water—have been often, and sometimes justly, abused; but there have been cases where they have aided a piece most materially,

without any sacrifice of the true playhouse illusion. At the old Queen's Theatre in Dublin—a small but historic house—a large scene-door at the back of the stage opened on to a paved lane, beyond which, in full view of the audience, was an old brick wall, topped by old trees, and beyond these the backs of old houses. When the *Courier of Lyons* was played, the parts of Lesurques and Dubosq being represented by the lessee and manager, Mr. Harry Webb (one of the Two Dromios), the scene-door was thrown open, and the attack on the mail-coach took place in the alley outside the theatre. This part of this clever drama was never represented with more realism or dramatic spirit.

Solid and appropriate scenery is not rejected by a primitive stage, like the stage of the Oberammergau Theatre in Bavaria. Painted by artists from Munich—the great art centre, and a city where the state theatres have raised elaborate stage production to the dignity of a fine art—the scenery of the Passion Play blends with nature—with the snow-capped mountain amphitheatre and the wooded valley of the peasants. The sacred play has all the aids in costume and properties which the art teachers of Munich can give it, and the Crucifixion, in realistic effect, has never been equalled within my experience.

Where art sometimes leaves the stage in the work of production is in the solidly-built scenes which are usurping the place of stage pictures. A solid street may have advantages for stage "business"—and certain solid pieces are often, if not always, necessary; but a great sacrifice is made when the scenic artist need be little more than a "decorator," and we lose the triumphs and beauties of good stage perspective. The stage carpenter may be a necessary evil; but a worse evil, if he comes, will be the stage bricklayer.

THE EXPERIMENTAL MATINÉE.

By Leopold Wagner.

WE hear very little of the experimental matinée nowadays. It seems to have entirely slipped out of fashion. Time was when the boards of the Gaiety groaned under the weight of matinée productions. Then the Prince of Wales's came into the ascendant, and, more recently, the Vaudeville, the Comedy, and Terry's. Within the last few years experimental matinées have been few and far between. Does this bespeak a want of

faith therein on the part of authors and managers? One feels inclined to answer in the affirmative. Those most interested have, at all events, discovered that the critics treat the experimental matinée with scant respect. Not that they would hesitate to praise a good play were such a one to be presented to them between lunch and dinner. The press verdict on *The Mummy*—quite an isolated example of the experimental matinée, by the way—was sufficiently encouraging to cause the bold matinéer to arrange for a series of evening performances at another theatre. But *The Mummy* was produced under exceptional advantages. It was a good play in itself; it was exceedingly well played; and it was the only novelty of the London season. Hence it aroused a certain degree of public interest. Had it followed upon the heels of several matutinal failures the result might have been very different. So much depends upon circumstances.

A great deal might be said for and against the experimental matinée. It has its uses, of course. Mr. Thomas Thorne was wont to set much store by it. All his Vaudeville productions were sprung upon the public at a matinée, and quietly dropped into the evening bill on the first Monday following. From his point of view this was a most excellent arrangement. It enabled him to test a new play without interrupting the run of the old one. It relieved his company from the tension of a first-night performance. And, in the event of a failure, the attendant loss would have been inconsiderable. But the Vaudeville productions were hardly calculated to fail. They were all constructed upon similar lines, employing a hard-working stock company, and rehearsed with all the care and completeness usually bestowed upon a first-night representation.

Mark now the difference between an experimental matinée under the auspices of a well-known manager having his own theatre and company, and one given by an outside speculator, be he author, actor, agent, or financial go-between. In any case a theatre must be hired for the single performance. The cost of this may be roughly stated at £30. The company engaged must perforce be a good one; that is to say, it must consist largely, if not wholly, of popular favourites. Actors and actresses of unacknowledged position would not inspire confidence among the critics. Item, therefore, for the company's services, say from £40 to £50. Add to this an adequate honorarium for an acting manager who thoroughly understands his business, and the incidentals of printing and advertising, and no change would be left out of £100. This is putting the estimate at its very lowest. As a matter of fact, the average cost of an experimental matinée is £120.

We will suppose the author, or the *débutante*, or the financial friend of the one or the other, to be perfectly willing to risk such a sum on the chance of the play proving a success. Rehearsals are set on foot. One cannot have too many rehearsals of a new play, yet those which the matinée giver has at his command are obviously of the fewest. Nor can he always rely upon assembling his company on the same boards, because the stage of the hired theatre may be required by the resident manager. Another disadvantage under which he labours is that he rarely succeeds in getting all the members of his company together for rehearsal. It is too often the custom for the principals to put in an excuse for their non-attendance on more or less legitimate grounds. Having only been "lent" for the purposes of the experimental matinée by their respective managers, they are not altogether their own masters. It so happens that there is a special matinée at their own theatre, or it may be at the Crystal Palace, or down at Brighton. The part has, consequently, to be read for them; and though "it will be all right at night," as the saying is, the author has his misgivings. Another element of non-success in the experimental matinée is that no one takes more than a passing interest in it. "It's only a matinée; the piece may never be heard of again!" Such is the general impression among those who are paid to do their best. For these combined reasons, not one play out of twenty produced at an experimental matinée ever does turn out a success; it would be little short of a miracle if it did. The matinée giver loses his money, and no one cares.

How different is the case where a new play is put up by a manager already in possession of a theatre! There the company work together with might and main, well knowing that if the play goes into the evening bill, lucrative engagements will be found for them all. However, the experimental matinée has ceased to be fashionable. Even managers seem to have lost faith in it. They have discovered other ways and means of testing the merits of a new play. They prefer to give our country cousins the benefit of a dramatic novelty. They have come to recognise that if a play is worth doing in London at all, it is worth doing well—much better than is possible at an experimental matinée. Provincial audiences are not so critical in the matter of an elaborate *mise-en-scène*. They are flattered by a "first performance on any stage" by a company specially brought down from London for the purpose, or by a competent touring company that chances to be visiting their town. On the score of cheapness there is much to be said for the new arrangement. Most of the plays of a lighter kind which have latterly found

favour in London were originally exploited in the provinces; some of them, too, in the most out-of-the-way places, as witness *Charley's Aunt*, which first saw the light at Bury St. Edmunds. Among productions of a heavier calibre, *The Manxman* and *The Sign of the Cross* were proved successes in the country long before they came to town. In its day the experimental matinée was a startling departure from theatrical tradition, but this latest departure has proved more acceptable still. The great wonder is that it did not dawn upon authors and managers long ago.

THE LOYALTY OF ENGLISH PLAYERS.

By R. W. Lowe.

THE relation of the stage and actors of old France to the ruling powers, whether lay or ecclesiastical, presents many strange contrasts with the relative position of the same classes in England. In France, the actors, though fostered and supported by the King and the nobles, never received the same complete recognition that they had in this country; and the favour of King and Court must have seemed to them but an insufficient support when it could not help them to obtain the privileges of the Church, which were not denied to even the meanest of their fellow-countrymen. Contrast the treatment meted out to the greatest of French dramatists and actors with the respect and consideration shown to English comedians of the same period. Think of Molière, refused Christian burial by the Archbishop of Paris; and, on the other hand, recall Steele's beautiful account of the burial of Molière's contemporary, Thomas Betterton, in the cloisters of Westminster Abbey, surrounded by the dust of the noblest and greatest of Englishmen. Remember, too, that while the famous Frenchman lay under the censure of Holy Church, the Englishman numbered among his friends the head of the Anglican Church, the devout and saintly Tillotson, Archbishop of Canterbury.

Such facts as these prepare us to find French actors more inclined than English to take up an unfriendly position towards the powers that be; and I am disposed to think that the former were also more sensitive than the latter to the influence of their audiences. It is a curious fact, too, that circumstances forced the French theatre into prominence as an arena for free speech just at the middle of the eighteenth century, when the forces of revolution were gradually advancing and making themselves felt. The care which was exercised in controlling every other means of

advancing popular theories, which decreed death as the punishment of those who attacked religion or the monarchy, seems to have slumbered over the licensing of plays; and many of the old tragedies were performed which exalted ancient republican simplicity and excellence, and descanted on the merits of pure government and high morality—all of which was a bitter satire on the hideous misgovernment and wickedness of the Bourbons Yet the Court does not seem to have seen the danger, and, owing to this immunity from interference, the theatre became practically the only place in the country where it was possible to listen in peace to sentiments of patriotism and praise of righteousness. Nor were the writers of new plays particularly careful of what they said in condemnation of wickedness in high places; and, although their lines were more or less abstract, the audiences were not slow in applying these general sentiments to the particular state of society. In 1787, for example, in a tragedy by one Duponceau, the following lines appeared:

> "Les grands l'ont approuvé: pourrait-il vous déplaire?
> Vous avez vu le peuple obéir et se taire . . .
> La voix du courtisan soutient d'injustes lois;
> Quand le peuple se tait il condamne ses rois."

But the play which might truly be said to mark the fall of the monarchical ascendency over the theatre was Chénier's tragedy of *Charles IX.*, produced in November, 1789, with Talma in the principal character. It was played in the very teeth of the poor King's veto, and the more loyal actors' disinclination; and its production, besides ending the real control of the King over the theatre, contributed powerfully to the downfall of the monarchy. Danton said of it: "Beaumarchais killed the noblesse; Chénier has cut the throat of royalty in France." Talma, who played the part of Charles IX., was a keen revolutionary, and on the same side were the famous players, Dugazon, Madame Vestris, and Mlle. Desgarcins. On the other hand, Fleury and many of the older players were faithful to their King, and faced even death rather than desert their principles. How dauntlessly they acted, and how near the guillotine their courage brought them, forms a most interesting story, which may be read in Mr. Frederick Hawkins' *French Stage in the Eighteenth Century*. There, too, may be read how, though the players got from the National Assembly the restoration of their full rights as citizens, the censorship of the republicans was more galling than that of the Monarchy, and the end of the Reign of Terror was joyfully welcomed by even the most revolutionary of the players.

If we turn to our own country, our first thought must be that, in comparison with the doubtful loyalty of so many French

actors, the faithfulness of the English players to King and Crown was very remarkable. As the French Revolution was the touchstone of the one, so the rising of the Parliament against Charles I. was the test of the other. But it must not be forgotten that the circumstances surrounding the two cases were widely different. The revolutionaries in France were as fond of a play as the King himself, and the theatre, as an institution and as a means of livelihood, was in no danger of extinction. But in England the choice lay between a King, the supporter of their calling, and a parliament which loathed and abominated it. So we must not praise too highly the generous impulse which led the actors during the Civil Wars to range themselves on the royalist side. Perhaps we ought rather to wonder that, when the time came for making a choice, even one of the players was found to embrace the Parliamentary cause. This exceedingly conscientious person was Eliard Swanston, who had been a famous representative of Othello. He must have been of a theological turn of mind, for he became a Presbyterian. He took up the trade of jeweller, and lived in Aldermanbury, where he attended the ministrations of Father Calamy, a noted preacher, who was rector of St. Mary's, Aldermanbury, from which he was ejected by the Act of Uniformity in 1662, having preached, no doubt, anything but the doctrines of the Church of England.

On the King's side was a great array of actors. Indeed, Wright, in his *Historia Histrionica*, the only authoritative history of the period, says that nearly all the actors, except Lowin, Pollard, and Tayler, who were too old to fight, joined the King's army; and, says our historian, "like good Men and true, Serv'd their Old Master, tho' in a different, yet more honourable, Capacity." Many of them no doubt fought in the ranks, but we know that several held commissions. Allen, of the Cockpit, who must not be confounded with Edward Alleyn, the founder of Dulwich College, held the rank of major, and was quartermaster-general at Oxford. Will Robins, or Robinson, also of the Cockpit, was killed at the siege of Basing House by "Butcher" Harrison, who shot him dead after he had laid down his arms, saying, as he murdered the defenceless player, "Cursed is he that doeth the work of the Lord negligently!" It will be remembered how Sir Walter Scott, in *Woodstock*, makes admirable use of this episode, representing Harrison as believing himself haunted by the ghost of poor Will Robinson. Sir Walter makes Wildrake say that Robinson "served for his old master, Charles, in Mohun's troop," which may possibly be true enough, but there is no record to that effect. The Mohun here mentioned was the famous actor, Michael Mohun, of whom a portrait exists among the treasures

of the Dulwich Gallery. He was an actor of some importance before the Civil War broke out; in the war he distinguished himself highly, and attained the rank of captain; and, after the downfall of the monarchy he served in Flanders, whence he returned with the title of major, by which he was afterwards generally described. He returned to his occupation of actor after the Restoration, and remained on the stage for more than twenty years. His great companion, Charles Hart, grandson of Shakspere's sister Joan, who was named the Roscius, as Mohun was the Æsopus, of the stage, also fought for his King. He was a lieutenant in Prince Rupert's regiment of cavalry; and in the same troop served another well-known actor, Burt, while Shatterel, a less famous player, was its quartermaster. John Lacy, who afterwards became the favourite actor of the second Charles, also fought in the Civil War.

After the Restoration the King showed marked attention to his faithful players. The theatrical companies which were formed under Davenant and Killigrew were honoured with the titles of "The King's Servants" and "The Duke's Company;" and ten members of the former were placed upon the royal household establishment, being styled Gentlemen of the Great Chamber. In this capacity they were allowed a certain quantity of scarlet cloth and lace for a livery; and it is interesting to know, on the authority of Dr. Doran, that Baddeley, the founder of the Twelfth Night banquet at Drury Lane, was the last player who wore the uniform of scarlet and gold prescribed for the Gentlemen of the Household, who were patented actors.

Since the days when the Merry Monarch conducted himself as a sort of general manager of theatrical performances it cannot be said that the contact between the throne and the actors has ever been very close. It has been left to our Queen to do an action which has attracted the regard not only of every actor but of everyone interested in the theatre. Far more than any honour previously conferred on the dramatic profession must the knighting of Henry Irving endear the monarch to the actors.

THE REAL JONATHAN WILD.*

By Joseph Hatton.

JONATHAN WILD was a cynic. He was also a thief. The public business, however, which he professed to follow was the capture of thieves and the hanging thereof. He was success-

**** A current interest attaches to the truth about Jonathan Wild from the fact of that interesting scoundrel being a prominent character in a coming new play, the production of which will probably be follow.d by another edition of Fielding's novel.

ful in both these directions, and is noted in history as the most daring of middlemen. "If you question me about thieves," he said to one who sought his aid in a delicate matter of robbery, "I have nothing to say to you; but that I can give a good account of myself. My name is Wild, and I live in Cock-alley by Cripplegate, where you may find me any day in the week, and so, sir, your humble servant." Some goods had been offered in pawn by a suspected person. The broker had had the honesty to stop them, and if the gentleman who had been robbed was willing to treat, well; if not, why then no harm was done; and Jonathan, with a shrug of his shoulders, was quite willing to let the business go; but the loser soon came to the thief-taker's terms. Jonathan was not only the principal detective and in league for a time with the City Marshal in blackmailing operations as middlemen between robber and robbed, but he was the all-prevailing chief and director of the bandits of the day, highwaymen, shoplifters, forgers, burglars, and dealers in stolen goods. Not long content with Cock-alley, he removed to the more convenient locality of the Old Bailey, where he lived in good style, had several courses for dinner, drank choice wines, wore fine clothes, sported a rapier by his side, and in his pocket carried a silver staff with a crown on it, supposed by the ignorant to be an official symbol of his high office, and tolerated by the authorities as an unofficial pass into evil quarters where it might be difficult for the King's warrant to run.

Beginning his London career in prison he made many useful acquaintances and friends. They included a lady of free and easy manners, who for a time was a useful ally in laying in a foundation of knowledge that made Wild master of all the various resources of criminal activity. He soon knew every thief in town, their haunts, habits, and methods. First coming to their assistance as a receiver, he eventually made them his servants. He not only had an office where those who had lost anything made known their troubles, but it was also the headquarters of communication with the criminals who had committed the depredations of which the others had to complain. For the plundered it was a kind of Exchange. Having paid a fee of five shillings, they stated the nature of their loss. The details were duly entered in day books and ledgers by knowing clerks; and Mr. Wild undertook to do his best to recover the property. In most cases he was successful, his commission was gladly paid, and he had many grateful clients. He knew well enough at the outset where to lay his hands on the stolen goods, and if he did not then he had been juggled with by some impertinent thief whom he at once unmasked and hunted to death. His employés,

as a rule, from their introduction into his service, were working with "the rope round their necks." When they rebelled Jonathan soon got the hangman at the other end of it, and society thanked him for bringing another scoundrel to justice. He did this work of "the blind lady with the scales" in a manner no less completely than that of "honest broker" as between my lord who had lost his family plate and the cracksman who had carried it off. It happened now and then that hardly had his lordship replaced the precious store in the family chests than the same thief made a second levy; but, fortunately, Mr. Wild had got an inkling of the villainy and had ferreted out the place where the plate was hidden, so that it was once more restored to his lordship, the second time without much trouble and at less expense, while Jonathan had promised his outraged lordship that the thief should not go unpunished.

Not only had this extraordinary man an Exchange where lost jewels, plate, deeds, notes, and property of all kinds, merchandise, linen goods, woollens, were registered as lost and paid for on restoration. He established a kind of Thieves' College where robbery as a fine art was taught by professors. It was no miserable hole such as Fagin's in *Oliver Twist*, but of an altogether higher grade. The students were instructed in the ways and manners of the town, some for one line of business, some for another. Masters of deportment turned out gallants who played the part of bucks at Ranelagh and Vauxhall, and made many valuable prizes of watches, purses, snuff-boxes, and even swords; others learnt how to become gentlemen's servants, footmen, and the like, obtaining by forged characters and other introductions situations in good families, whereby the secrets of their accessible wealth were exploited for the use and benefit of the well-instructed and capable housebreaker. Tuition was not confined to male students. Cynic though he was, Jonathan had a soft heart for the fair sex. He married several of them, and is said to have lived more or less comfortably with one who was "quite a decent kind of body," and no doubt thought all the world of her masterful husband with his sword by his side, his silver staff, and his liberal table. At one time he had several warehouses in which his assistants stored the stolen goods brought in by his army of operators; and when the Government began to wake up to the vast business that was done in the way of "receiving," and sought to check it by Act of Parliament, he invested in a sloop and did business on the sea between the Thames and the ports of Holland. He was a man of remarkable resource, a keen and subtle diplomat of varied experience, and had a pretty wit of his own, as is shown by the pamphlet he wrote in reply to an

exposure printed against him by the City Marshal. The two rogues falling out, they sought to blacken each other's characters, and pave the way for each other to the gallows. The Government and the police were too much occupied, one presumes, in other directions to take the hint and make short work of the rival scoundrels. Jonathan, even after this, aspired to civic honours, and awakened jealousies more potent than those of the discredited Marshal.

When you think of the noted gallants of the road, the famous cracksmen, the daring burglars, the wily receivers, the police themselves as merely the puppets of Jonathan Wild, who lived in state, and rode in his coach, you realise that he was something more than the vulgar villain of Ainsworth's novel, masquerading with a patch on his eye in company with Blueskin. One can only stand and wonder at him. He kept a company of artists to alter the marks on watches and snuff boxes, and re-engrave old plate so as to take these things out of the way of identification and make them saleable property. Now and then he made a friend for life of some eminent person by obtaining for him the restoration of valuable property, without fee or charge of any kind, just to show that the professional thief-taker worked more for the love of justice and the fame of a master of his craft than for mere sordid gain. He was bitterly resentful of opposition nevertheless; obdurate, merciless, a devil in taking his revenge where he had been thwarted and made light of by one of his gang; cruel, remorseless, unforgiving, a black-hearted villain. And when his time came he died like a coward!

Portraits.

MISS ELLALINE TERRISS.

MR. TERRISS has deserved well of the dramatic world. Himself one of the most popular actors on the stage, he has given to it a charming actress in his daughter and a promising comedian in his son. Though Miss Ellaline Terriss had not always a desire to adopt her father's profession, she had left school but a short while when she began her career, being engaged by Mr. Charles Wyndham immediately after he had seen her taking part in a semi-private performance at Lady Freak's. The three years Miss Terriss has been playing in musical pieces have led many people to forget that she has a pretty talent for dramatic work of more value. For four or five years after her *début* in *The Two Roses* she was constantly engaged for *ingénue* or light comedy parts. Her delightful playing in such pieces as *The Pantomime Rehearsal* showed her the possessor of a dainty sense of fun, while nothing could have been better than her Lady Wilhelmina in *The Amazons*. Even when called upon to take Miss Mary Moore's part in *David Garrick* she came well out of the ordeal, and it was evident that the range of her abilities was not to be so circumscribed as is the case with many young actresses. Noting her record chronologically, we find her remaining at the Criterion, with short interim engagements at Terry's and the Strand, until 1891, when she took part in the revivals of *The School for Scandal* and of *Wild Oats*. Then came a period of melodrama at the Princess's, and following that a long stay at the Court, which ended when she became the Cinderella in Mr. Oscar Barrett's first pantomime at the Lyceum. A tender and graceful embodiment she gave of the nursery-tale heroine, and won the warmest praise both in London and in America, where she went with the piece in the spring of 1894, accompanied by her husband, Mr. Seymour Hicks. The autumn of that year found her playing with him in *Little Jack Sheppard* at the Gaiety; and there she has since remained, taking a leading part in the subsequent productions of *The Shop Girl* and *My Girl*. In each of these curious mélanges she has acted and sung with a charm and refinement that are rare in pieces of this class, but one cannot help hoping for the time when she will find work more worthy both of her talents and of her family traditions. There need be no fear that she will fail to make good use of the opportunity when it comes.

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MISS ELLALINE TERRISS.

At the Play.

IN LONDON.

The conclusion of the autumn season is destined to be marked by several important changes at various west-end houses. Pieces that seemed full of vitality only a few weeks ago have suddenly collapsed, and successors to them have had to be found. If one may judge by recent events, it would also appear that the taste for musical plays is much less pronounced than formerly, and that the public is again on the outlook for some new form of entertainment.

A White Elephant.

An Original Farce, in Three Acts, by R. C. Carton. Produced at the Comedy Theatre, November 19.

Joseph Ogden .. Mr. Charles Brookfield	Lady Gwendoline Ogden .. Miss Compton
The Earl of Bawcombe .. ..Mr. Eric Lewis	Letitia Ogden .. .. ..Miss Mansfield
Hon. Stacey Gillam Mr. Charles Hawtrey	Emily Rawston .. ..Miss Nina Boucicault
Mr. Tweed .. .. .. Mr. Henry Kemble	Celestine .. .. .. Miss Nina Cadiz
Robert Peploe .. .. Mr. Cecil Ramsay	Mrs. Jauncey .. ..Mrs. Charles Calvert
Charles Glenthorne .. Mr. W. T. Lovell	Mrs. Cyrus N. Dowker Miss Lottie Venne
Bigsby .. .. Mr. William F. Hawtrey	

A White Elephant is a curiously uneven piece of work, possessing distinct merits and faults no less decided. To its credit must be placed witty dialogue and clever characterisation, while the debit side of the account is represented by indifferent construction and an ineffective plot. As a whole, the piece lacks fibre and point, and, although in a sense ingenious, suffers from indistinctness. The impression left upon the spectator by its performance is that of a blurred photograph which suggests rather than conveys the idea intended to be given. Had Mr. Carton been content to develop his story by simpler means the gain would have been immense; but in place of relying upon the obvious, which surely is the true dramatic method, he has exerted himself to invent complications and to create characters that are not only unnecessary but calculated to leave the audience irritated and perplexed. There is, notwithstanding, so much excellent matter in *A White Elephant* that its ultimate success, in spite of the defects referred to, may be hoped for. The story, baldly narrated, will hardly strike anyone as startlingly novel. Robert Peploe, head clerk to Joseph Ogden, tea-broker, has secretly married Letitia, the latter's sister, and the moment arrives when the two determine to run away from the paternal roof. Ogden's wife, the Lady Gwendoline, a good-

natured, vacuous, and lymphatic woman, agrees to accompany them as far as London out of consideration for the convenances. Circumstances lead her husband to believe that she has in reality eloped with her cousin, the Hon. Stacey Gillam, whom she has pressed into her service, and consequently Ogden follows in hot pursuit. Meanwhile, Stacey, who has come a "mucker" on the Stock Exchange, has promised to marry a Mrs. Dowker, who, it appears, has had certain purely platonic relations in the past with Mr. Ogden. In order to recover a photograph, she writes announcing her intention of calling at the latter's town house, where, in the last act, all, or most of, the characters are found assembled. Here, after a deal of needless complication, the necessary explanations are afforded, and the curtain falls on a scene of general happiness. From this brief sketch it will be noticed that several of the personages in the cast have been omitted, a circumstance which emphasises the fact how slight their bearing upon the story is. *A White Elephant* is by no means the sort of piece dear to the heart of the actor-manager. The opportunities afforded even Mr. Charles Hawtrey by the author are, in truth, few. Only in the second act has he one scene worthy of his abilities, but that he played with consummate ease and finish. Miss Lottie Venne is still worse off, as she does not appear until a few minutes before the fall of the curtain, but even in those few minutes she contrived to make her mark. The part of the piece, that of Lady Gwendoline, falls to Miss Compton, whose assumption of bored politeness and good-natured indifference was excellent. Mr. Charles Brookfield has scarcely sufficient weight to carry the part of Joseph Ogden, but, as usual, he delivered his lines with the fullest sense of their significance. An extraordinarily effective and vivid sketch of a London housekeeper was given by Mrs. Charles Calvert, while Miss Nina Boucicault, in the small part of Emily Rawston, was as bright and clever as ever. A word also is due to Mr. Cecil Ramsay for his admirable study of Robert Peploe. The remaining characters were in competent hands.

The Manxman.

The Original Version, in Five Acts, dramatised by Wilson Barrett from Hall Caine's novel of the same name. Music by Sydney Jones. Produced at the Lyric Theatre, November 16.

Pete Quillam	Mr. Wilson Barrett	Johnnie	Mr. C. Derwood
Philip Christian ..	Mr. Austin Melford	Dr. Mylechreest ..	.. Mr. Percy Foster
Ross Christian ..	Mr. Horace Hodges	Jonique Jelly ..	Mr. Marcus St. John
Cæsar Cregeen ..	Mr. Ambrose Manning	Kate Cregeen ..	..Miss Maud Jeffries
Monty Missit	Mr. George Howard	Miss Christian ..	..Miss Alice Gambier
Professor Mawley ..	.. Mr. G. Bernage	Nancy	..Miss Daisy Belmore.
Black Tom	Mr. Stafford Smith	Bella Kelly	Miss Rose Pendennis

Six months ago a version, understood, although not publicly acknowledged, to be by Mr. Wilson Barrett, of Mr. Hall Caine's novel, *The Manxman*, was produced at the Shaftesbury, and

withdrawn after a fortnight's run. In this, Philip Christian figured as the principal character. The work, it is an open secret, was undertaken at Mr. Caine's earnest desire, and against the judgment of the adapter, who had already found in Pete Quillam a hero better fitted to his own personality and more suitable to the requirements of a sympathetic drama. Now that both pieces have been seen in London, there can be no uncertainty as to which is the stronger and more effective. At the same time, we are disposed to believe even now that with a little care and thought the "Philip" version might have been fashioned into a really noble play. This, however, is more or less a subject of speculation. The later—later so far as London production is concerned, but in reality earlier in point of conception—adaptation is in the nature of a domestic play. It barely touches the story of Philip Christian's treachery towards the confiding Pete, and entirely ignores his great scene of confession and expiation in the court-house. But, on the other hand, there is an abundance—one might almost say a little too much—of Pete himself, the simple, big-hearted, and unsuspecting fisherman whose happiness is destroyed by the perfidy of the woman he has made his wife and the man he loves better than a brother. It may be doubted whether Mr. Wilson Barrett has ever been seen to such advantage as in this character, which he plays with beautiful simplicity, the deepest pathos, and superb force. He is a little apt, perhaps, to linger excessively over his emotion, to extract every drop of sympathy from the part. But so exquisite is the conception, so full of human nature and genuine, although humble, sentiment, that one is loth to quarrel with any of the details in view of the perfect picture presented. Miss Maud Jeffries scarcely possesses the power required for so arduous a part as that of Kate Cregeen, but what she lacks in strength is more than atoned for by the womanly tenderness and grace of her performance. Mr. Ambrose Manning furnished a finished study of the sanctimonious Cæsar Cregeen, and Mr. Horace Hodges an admirable sketch of the raffish Ross. In the Lyric version Philip is little more than a shadow, and consequently Mr. Austin Melford may be forgiven if he failed to accomplish much with the part. The remaining characters were in competent hands.

The Haven of Content.

A Play in Four Acts, by Malcolm Watson. Produced at the Garrick Theatre, November 17.

Clive Northcote ..	Mr. Ernest Leicester	Evans	Mr. R. J. Beauchamp
Lord Henry Silcroft..	..Mr. Julius Knight	Saunders	..Mr. Lesly Thomson
James Fenton, M.P..	Mr. John Beauchamp	Lady Jane Sudeley ..	.. Miss Granville
Mr. Vulliamy	.. Mr. A. E. George	Mrs. Fenton	.. Miss M. Talbot
Mr. Cheadley	.. Mr. R. E. Warton	Chris	Miss Haidee Wright

There was only once a perfect play; but we do not remember

the name of it, and we have forgotten the theatre at which it was produced. If Mr. Malcolm Watson has not written a perfect play, he gets nearer the mark than most dramatists. *The Haven of Content*, which has now passed triumphantly through the ordeal by matinée—to say nothing of taking Bristol by storm at the preliminary performance given at the local theatre a few weeks ago—is a piece for which any actuary would assure a long life, for the author humours the popular taste for a story, and addresses himself at the same time to the critical playgoer who can appreciate literary excellence. Reversing the usual course, he begins slowly, though he soon makes up for the delay at the opening of the play in getting to the interest—or, we should honestly say, the excitement. Once fairly started, however, the plot develops progressively till it reaches the extraordinarily powerful and audacious climax of the third act, when the distracted heroine, Chris Fenton, moved to it by the suspicion that Clive Northcote has been murdered, reveals in a magnificent outburst of passion the fact that her affections are not engaged to the man she has promised to marry. "He who will to Cupar maun to Cupar," as the saying is; and Lord Henry Silcroft discovers the truth; which he has set his heart upon finding out, and seeing that Chris Fenton prefers Clive Northcote to the husband her parents have chosen for her, Lord Henry makes up for all his shortcomings by an act of resignation and of unquestionable prudence. The character of the impetuous, brutal young nobleman, who is not entirely a monster, is but one of many characters firmly defined by the author, who has drawn men and women of a kind only too uncommon in romantic plays. The heroine's father, in whom Clive has the mortification of finding the rogue he has been tracking since he vowed to hunt down the man who ruined his father, is no ordinary villain, but a man of flesh and blood; and such an engaging, affectionate, natural woman as Lady Jane Sudeley is to be met more often off the stage than on it. Lady Jane is a creation, and the author does not leave the audience to take for granted her reputation for wit. Development of the story keeps step with development of character, and Mr. Watson shows a dramatist's eye to "business" in the management of the scene. What unsuspected interest is concentrated upon that desk at which Mr. Fenton sits writing at the beginning of the second act! A scene of tenderness between the father and daughter, when Chris, who has no heart for the marriage he proposes for her, asks to be allowed to remain his "little secretary," is followed by a pretty passage between the young lovers, and then, as they sit, facing each other, he directing the envelopes at her dictation, there come

the bombshell. The first clue to the mystery he is seeking to fathom is put into his hands by Chris, who thus helps unwittingly to destroy her own happiness till the time comes for the inevitable issue. The play was much better acted than is usual at morning performances, for the company worked zealously, though it would be vain to pretend that so strenuous a play would not profit by the acting of more experienced performers. Then come the talented young people who took part in it. Miss Haidée Wright, who has founded a reputation as an emotional actress upon her performance of the boy Stephanus in *The Sign of the Cross*, cannot be said to possess all the essential qualifications for the part of the heroine, and although she acted feelingly, she fell into the same error as some of the other sin taking the part too seriously. Her voice actually quavered with sensibility at the mention of the village plumber. Mr. A. E. George, as the affable lawyer, and Mr. Julius Knight, as Lord Henry Silcroft, earned promotion; and Miss Granville's finished performance of Lady Jane established a sound title to the future regard of the playgoer.

His Little Dodge.

A Comedy, in Three Acts, from the French of George Feydeau and Maurice Henniquin, by Justin Huntly McCarthy. Produced at the Royalty Theatre, October 24.

Sir Hercules Little .. .. Mr. Fred Terry	Grice .. .. Mr. Frank Dyall
The Hon. Mandeville Hobb Mr. Weedon Grossmith	The Lady Miranda Little Miss Ellis Jeffreys
Mr. Pollaby Petlow.. Mr. Alfred Maltby	Candy .. .. Miss Leila Repton

As reference has already been made in *The Theatre* to the class of piece to which Mr. McCarthy's adaptation of *Le Système Ribardier* belongs, there is no need to dwell at further length upon this unsavoury matter. The first two acts, in which Sir Hercules Little's elaboration of a "little dodge" whereby to circumvent the jealous attentions of his too uxorious spouse is made manifest, are cleverly written, while one of the situations shows real comic invention. But the whole thing is too disagreeable in character and tone to court examination. The acting, on the other hand, was throughout admirable. Not usually associated with comedy parts, Mr. Fred Terry, notwithstanding, revealed a briskness of method and lightness of touch worthy almost of Mr. Wyndham himself. Mr. Weedon Grossmith gave an exceedingly neat and quaint performance of Mandeville Hobb, "from Venezuela," and Mr. Alfred Maltby, although palpably suffering from nervousness, an amusing portrait of the irascible wine-merchant, Pollaby Petlow. But quite the best bit of acting came from Miss Ellis Jeffreys, whose powers as a comedian seem to increase every day. To a refined and graceful style Miss Jeffreys adds a keen sense of humour, which

enables her to appreciate and give effect to every point in her part. Her manner is singularly free from the slightest suspicion of coarseness, and if there is thin ice to be skated over she knows as well as any actress on the stage how to accomplish the task, not only successfully, but also with entire credit to herself. *His Little Dodge* was preceded by a play in one act and two tableaux, entitled *The Storm*, by Mr. Ian Robertson, which proved to be more or less of a variant upon the well-known *Luthier de Crémone*, with little, however, of the charm and power to be found in that piece. It was performed by Mr. H. V. Esmond, Mr. H. B. Irving, and Miss Dorothy Hammond.

Donna Diana.

A Poetical Comedy, in Four Acts, re-written from the German version of Moreto's *El Desden con el Desden*, by Westland Marston. Revived at the Prince of Wales's Theatre, November 4.

Don Cæsar .. .. Mr. Arthur Bourchier	Donna Laura .. Miss Mabel Beardsley
Don Luis, Prince of Béarne Mr. Henry Vibart	Donna Fenisa .. Miss E. Scott Daymar
Don Gaston, Count of Foix Mr. Chas. Troode	Floretta .. .. Miss Irene Vanbrugh
Don Diego .. .. Mr. Mark Kinghorne	Donna Diana .. Miss Violet Vanbrugh
Perin .. .. Mr. W. G. Elliot	

Thirty-three years have passed since the original production of *Donna Diana*, and it can hardly be declared that Dr. Westland Marston's work reveals no sign of age. Its revival shows the piece to be cumbersome in form, turgid in the matter of dialogue, and somewhat long drawn out. The two principal characters are obviously modelled upon those of Katharine and Petruchio; while the play itself constantly recalls *The Taming of the Shrew*, although possessing little of the brilliancy and wit of Shakspere's comedy. The reason for its resuscitation is doubtless to be found in the fact that Mr. Arthur Bourchier desires to include it in his American repertory, and that before deciding on the step he wished to have the opinion of London critics regarding its merits. Upon the whole, we are disposed to advise him not to persist in his intention, inasmuch as neither he nor Miss Violet Vanbrugh can reasonably expect to issue triumphantly from a comparison with Mr. John Drew and Miss Ada Rehan in similar parts. Miss Vanbrugh, it is true, possesses many of the qualifications required to play Donna Diana. She is tall, and can be both stately and dignified. But, unfortunately, she does not quite grasp the significance of the character which, in her hands, becomes little better than that of a noisy virago. Now Donna Diana is a Princess, and although subject to outbursts of passion, is by no means a common shrew. Forgetful of this fact, Miss Vanbrugh struck a high note at the very outset of her performance, maintaining it to the end, until the strain upon the listener became almost intolerable. Into her reading she imported no sense of light and shade, of contrast or relief.

Mr. Arthur Bourchier made a gallant Don Cæsar. The character, nevertheless, is a little beyond his scope, and he is tempted to place too much reliance upon his power of facial display. For the rest, one is constrained to conclude that a training obtained in the school of modern farce is hardly of the best kind to fit artists to shine in the delivery of blank verse. Although welcome from the standpoint of curiosity, the revival of *Donna Diana* cannot be said to have awakened anything like a feeling of abiding interest.

Poor Old Perkins.

A Farcical Comedy, in Three Acts, by Percival H. T. Sykes. Produced at the Strand Theatre, November 3.

John Thomas Perkins .. Mr. Harry Paulton, Jun.	Mrs. Perkins .. .. .. Miss Ada Murray
Captain Frank Stone .. Mr. Percy Murray	Ada Perkins .. .. Miss Ada St. Ruth
Lieut. James Rill .. Mr. George Holwood	Blanche Merton .. .. Mrs. Ivy Dacre
Signor Bertini .. .. Mr. Harold Child	Mary Trotter .. .. Miss Thea Lesbrooke
	Signora Bertini .. Miss Laurel King

The most that can be said for Mr. Sykes's farcical comedy is that it contains nothing to offend the most sensitive. The story deals with the manœuvres of two youthful officers, who, in order to prosecute their love affairs successfully, assume the disguise of an Italian named Bertini, whose pretensions are favourably looked upon by Poor Mr. Perkins and his masterful spouse. Eventually Bertini's wife appears upon the scene, to the astonishment and confusion of the enterprising pair. However, as Lieutenant Rill has previously persuaded Ada, old Perkins's daughter, to accompany him to the registrar's office, there is nothing left for the old couple to do but to give their consent. The farce, if by no means of a novel pattern, has some amusing moments, and was fairly well played by the company engaged. It was preceded by a one-act play called *For the Czar*, from the pen of the same author, in which a somewhat conventional plot is set forth not without skill.

Round a Tree.

A Play, in One Act, by W. H. Risque. Produced at the Vaudeville Theatre, November 11.

Grundy .. .. Mr. Neville Doone	Josephine .. .. .. Miss Florence Lloyd
Mrs. Grundy .. .. Miss Sibyl Grey	Sam .. .. .. Mr. Geo. Grossmith, Jun.
Lobbett .. .. .. Mr. Cairns James	

Originally named *Semi-Detached*, Mr. W. H. Risque's little piece had at the last moment to be re-christened *Round a Tree*. The new title is by no means a happy one, having only a vague bearing upon the subject-matter. Nor is the use of the word "play" quite justifiable in connection with what proved to be a boisterous farce of a somewhat old-fashioned pattern. The piece, however, is in its rough-and-ready way sufficiently amusing and

well adapted to keep early comers in a pleasing state of mind. The story shows how Mrs. Grundy, although hardly out of the honeymoon stage, has become irritated by her husband's want of attention. So, to awaken his jealousy, she persuades a girl friend to assume male attire, and make desperate love to her. This Josephine Lobbett consents to do, and in order to bring a hesitating admirer to his knees, she pretends at the same time that she, in her new character, is courting herself. The trick succeeds, and all ends satisfactorily for the various persons concerned. Miss Florence Lloyd made a capital youth, and played the part with great spirit, while Mr. George Grossmith, jun., provided a recognisable caricature of—Mr. George Grossmith, jun.

IN THE PROVINCES.

At the Gaiety Theatre, Dublin, on October 23rd, Mr. and Mrs. Kendal produced *A Flash in the Pan*, a new four-act play by Mr. Allen Upward. Thirty years before the period of the story, a man has committed suicide for the reason that he was unable to disprove an accusation of cheating at cards. His son grows up with the all-absorbing idea of being revenged upon John Sedgersleigh, his father's accuser, whom he regards as a murderer. The opportunity comes when Sedgersleigh's son, after a game of cards, becomes his debtor to the amount of £2000. Young Sedgersleigh applies to his father for the money, and, on being refused, forges his father's name on a bill. Then old Sedgersleigh acknowledges the wrong he has done in the past, and craves mercy for his son. The son of the man he had driven to death is, however, adamant, and insists on handing young Sedgersleigh over to justice; but when he learns that the girl he loves is the daughter of John Sedgersleigh, he at once destroys the forged bill. The part of the son who has his father's death to avenge is tactfully played by Mr. Kendal. If it is not impertinent so to speak of an actor who has been before the public for a great many years, it may be remarked that Mr. Kendal's work is decidedly improving. In *The Greatest of These* he did what seemed to many to be the best piece of character acting he has yet given us, and now as Sir Everard Grey he quite maintains that high level. Mrs. Kendal gave charm and distinction to a subordinate part. That she consented to play so unimportant a character can only be regarded in the light of a compliment to the playwright, who now comes forward for the first time as a dramatic author—a *début* that may be regarded as successful in every way. Mr. William Lugg and Mr. Rodney

Edgecumbe played the Sedgersleighs, and other parts are ably filled by Mr. Rudge Harding and Mr. J. F. Graham. Miss Nellie Campbell as the heroine was graceful in the comedy scenes, and convincing in the more important moments.

IN PARIS.

The past month has been productive of a number of striking novelties. At the Gaîté M. Maurice Ordonneau's *La Poupée*, an opera in three acts, music by M. Audran, is extremely droll. A doll maker has constructed a speaking doll on the model of his daughter, and is so delighted with his handiwork that he determines not to sell it, but to keep it for his private delectation. A would-be purchaser presents himself, but the doll happens to have been broken by the daughter, who, to avoid the pain to her father of learning this, personates the doll. A number of amusing complications follow, and the piece winds up with a marriage more curious than orthodox. The double rôle of young girl and speaking doll is admirably rendered by Mlle. Mariette Sully. At the Porte-Saint-Martin *Les Bienfaiteurs*, by M. Brieux, a comedy in four acts, is of quite another order, a serious and highly dramatic work on one of the difficult social problems of the day—namely, how to discriminate in the practice of charity. The piece, despite a certain weakness which obscures the *leit motif* and keeps the attention of the spectator rather needlessly strained by a long delay in clearing up, is very clever.

"Rich gifts wax poor when givers prove unkind,"

would have made an apt second title, and have forthwith put the audience in the proper key of expectation. It is a piece, by the way, that may possibly lend itself to a good English adaptation.

The *Villa Gaby*, at the Gymnase, by M. Léon Gaudillot, is, however, perhaps, the chief event of the month. It is one of those racy comedies, full of sparkling dialogue and allusions to current things, dear to the Parisian. Brilliantly sustained from beginning to end, it has met with instant success, though it is the old story of the virtuous wife thrown into suspicious circumstances and suspected by her husband, whom a beneficent fate eventually restores to her loving arms. Mlle. Rosa Bruck as the wife and Mlle. Jahn as an *ingénue* up to date are delightfully good.

Madame l'Avocat at the Athénée Comique, a new theatre built on the site of the late Eden Theatre, a vaudeville in three acts, by M. Delpré and M. Gallipaux, has not had the success it seemed entitled to. *Le Partage*, a comedy in three acts, by M. Guinon, at the

Vaudeville, with the principal part rendered by Madame Réjane, is another clever production. It is not, however, a piece according to the English standpoint of propriety. The title fairly indicates the subject. It has dramatic intensity and feeling, and is likely to be included in the permanent repertory of the Paris stage.

The revival of *Don Juan* at the Opéra will be hailed by all lovers of music. It has not been given in Paris since 1887, and now it is on both at the Opéra and at the Opéra Comique. At the Opéra Delmas and Madame Rose Caron show the suppleness of their talent by a success not inferior to that they have had in modern pieces of a very different kind, and have disproved a common assertion that the practice of Wagnerian methods incapacitates singers for the lighter work of the older masters. At the Opéra Comique Mlle. Delna in the rôle of Zerline is admirable. It is an odd treat for the Parisians to have a match between two operatic houses, and shows the progress which sport is making in the French capital.

IN BERLIN.

Hermann Sudermann is still the dramatist whose works excite most interest in Germany on the occasion of their first performance. At the Deutsches Theater there has been brought out *Morituri*, which title includes three one-act plays respectively called *Teja*, *Fritzchen*, and *Das ewig männliche*. Of these three pieces the two first are described as dramas, and the last is a "play." The resemblance between the three consists in the fact that in each the hero is doomed to die, in the two first as the result of tragic circumstances, in the last through a witty and amusing jest most cleverly worked out. Moreover, the pieces are so markedly distinct in plan and development that if we did not know it one would hardly guess that they were the work of the same author. *Teja* is a dark and gloomy picture taken from the history of the last kings of the Goths, drawn in the blackest colours, and so depressing that the audience would find it intolerable were it not that, like a bright sunbeam, the love of Bathilda for the King pierces through the darkness, and, idealizing the death struggle of the brave Goth, converts the tragedy of a people into that of an individual. At the foot of Vesuvius is stationed the remnant of the Goths shut in by the Byzantines, and looking for deliverance only from ships which should succour them in their dire extremity, for they are at present almost at the end of their supplies. Already they have to endure the greatest privations; hunger and misery prevail in the camp,

and all the weather-beaten and war-hardened warriors are almost ready to lie down and die. In this moment the leaders of the race, following their ancient custom, have chosen a wife for their king, and the marriage festival is about to be gone through. Sorrowfully and sadly it is performed, and no moment could be less appropriate for mirth than that in which, in the opinion of everyone, Teja, with the remnant of his people, is about to meet a melancholy fate. As the new Queen is led to the King the news arrives that the ships have been taken through treachery, and that all hope is lost. The gloomy Teja thinks of anything rather than his young and lovely wife, who stands before him filled with adoring and consuming admiration; and he proposes to his people the plan not to allow themselves to die of hunger, but to fall upon the enemy on the following day in open battle, and to die the despairing death of heroes. He wins over the at first hesitating Goths to his suggestion, and they resolve to throw themselves on death. In the night watch that follows the young Queen comes to her husband, and her submissive and sensible love makes a powerful impression on the gloomy, death-doomed prince. How Teja's intelligence awakens to the love of his young wife; how hitherto unknown and unsuspected chords are sounded in his nature must be seen and heard. Herr Sudermann carries through this change with a truly masterly hand, and brings it to its height when the young wife at the moment of winning her husband presses upon his forehead the consecrating kiss of death. The piece was received with the utmost enthusiasm, and at its conclusion the author was three times called before the curtain.

In the second piece, *Fritzchen*, we have a very different atmosphere. From the distant days of the Goths the spectator is suddenly transported to the most modern surroundings of life in contemporary Germany; the plot of the play is not concerned with the fatality overhanging a people, but with the conventional modern officer's sense of honour. It has to do with a duel in which a young and light-hearted officer finds himself compelled to take part because he has followed too closely his jovial father's counsel to lead a bit of a life and get the nonsense knocked out of him. Fritzchen is caught by the injured husband and whipped out of the place, and in these circumstances must regard it as a piece of good luck that the Court of Honour declares him to be worthy of claiming satisfaction. The audience is made to feel that the lad is doomed. As he withdraws with a friend and comrade, joking and laughing in order to spare his unsuspecting mother the bitterness of a farewell, no one believes in the possibility of his survival, and the spectator takes leave of him as

of one already dead. If Teja, in his wild passionateness, was a man whose feelings came strongly and frequently to the surface, Fritzchen is the product of a modern civilisation who keeps his feelings down, and in whom the mental and spiritual struggle is accomplished inwardly. The task of conveying to the audience the psychological development of the character is more difficult in the case of Fritzchen than in that of Teja, and the demand for facial expression and apt gesticulation is much more exacting.

Of *Das ewig männliche* space forbids us to say more than that it came as a most welcome relief to the feelings after the two powerful dramas which preceded it. It is a delightful dramatic joke, and reveals Herr Sudermann in a totally new light. He was already known as a delicate and charming humorist in his books, but this is the first time that he has produced a play containing so much good-natured wit in so happy and successful a form. The piece was most cordially received.

At the New Theatre a farce in three acts by Herren Hirschberger and Kratz has been drawing crowded houses. It is entitled *Bocksprünge* (*The Springing of a Goat*), and is an adaptation of a French idea. It must be admitted that the farce is very amusing, although it is extremely doubtful whether the scientific theory upon which it is based will bear practical investigation. The authors go upon the assumption that the blood of animals infused into the veins of human beings developes in the latter the peculiar characteristics of the animals from which it is taken. Thus a respectable sleepy old gentleman has some goat's blood transmitted into his system, and immediately begins to caper like a goat, while a jealous and passionate Hungarian who has received into his veins the blood of a lamb becomes as mild as that gentle animal in all the relations of life. The story is not one to bear serious analysis, but it convulses the audience with laughter; and that, perhaps, is all that its authors would claim to have desired to do.

Among other plays produced must be mentioned *Eine*, an Old German play in three acts by Max Dreyer, at the Schauspiel-Haus; *Der Drittemann*, by Robert Misch, at the Theater des Westens; *Renaissance*, a three-act comedy by Schönthan and Koppel-Ellfeld, at the Berliner Theater; and *Ein Königsidyll*, a three-act comedy in verse, by Rudolph Lothar, at the Schauspiel-Haus.

IN VIENNA.

Herr Sudermann's *Morituri*, which has met, according to the German newspapers, with such great success in Berlin,

was produced here at the Hofburg Theater on the same night. The three plays of which it is composed did not commend themselves in an equal degree to the Viennese public. *Teja* and *Fritzchen*, as the first two pieces are respectively named, were too gloomy for the taste of the joyous, gaiety-loving people of the Austrian capital; but *Das ewig männliche*, the last of the three, met with a very enthusiastic reception.

Sein Sohn, by Herr Felix Dörmann, has been brought out at the Raimund Theater. The author is a young man of the modern literary school, who has attracted the greatest attention of competent judges by a little volume of poems entitled *Neurotika*. The book came under the ban of the censor. A second volume then made its appearance, under the title of *Sensationen*. The work possesses a flowing quality of its own, and a certain perfumed fancy which gained for it the recognition of the "Moderns." In the café in the Schauflergasse in which the youthful founders of the modern German literature take counsel together every evening, out of which came Arthur Schnitzler with his *Liebelei*, and Leo Ebermann with his *Athenerin*, and which, as once the "Cafe Grössenwahn" will yet arrive at fame in literary history, in this centre of the heroes of poesy Felix Dörmann lives and works, and there too he finds appreciation. A theatre public, which is only cultured after a simple fashion, and which is composed of everyday men and women, cannot reach these heights, and some of them are so far behind the times and their duty that Dörmann's drama quite failed to appeal to them. They could find nothing interesting in the young untalented sculptor who envies his father—a really eminent sculptor—his power and his fame, and feels it intolerable to stand always in the shadow of this great father. To free himself from this situation he works for some weeks on a statue (after he has wasted years in trifling), and sends it to an exhibition in Munich. When it is rejected by the jury as unworthy of exhibition he blames his father, and accuses him of having intrigued against him out of envy and fear to be outdone by his son. This ill-conditioned young man tells his father all this, and worse besides, plainly to his face, and wants to do him actual physical harm because a girl for whom he (the son) has formed an attachment bestows greater respect and affection on the father than on him. Unfortunately, the father proves himself greater and greater as an artist, and the son becomes more and more jealous, until, finally, he puts an end to his miserable existence with a bottle of poison. Dörmann is not a great depicter of the agitation of the soul—so much must be admitted. He does possess, however, a very pretty talent for painting life

as it really is, and his scenes of studio life and the bohemianism of which it is made up are really very good.

In the Deutsches Volks Theater, Herr Georg Hirschfeld has had his drama *Die Mutter* brought out. It was very well received, and the young author met with a flattering reception. At the Theater an der Wien, a comic opera, *Der Löwenjäger*, by Paul von Schönthan and Leo Stein, the music by Verö, has seen the light. The composer is a Budapest conductor. The Hungarians show much inclination just now for comic opera. Paris offers nothing any longer in this department, Vienna but little, so that there is plenty of room for Budapest to come in. After Bokor we now have Verö; that means a certain progress. Verö's music to the *Löwenjäger* is simple, easy, and for the most part bright; only when it is sentimental is it conventional. The libretto is well thought out after the idea of the *Tartarin* of Daudet. A *bourgeois*, the Mayor Brisson, prides himself on having travelled in Africa, and having been on a lion hunt which almost cost him his life, and would have done so, if in the moment of his greatest danger, a mysterious stranger had not appeared, who, unknown, as he appeared so vanished. A young sculptor turns the situation to good account, and in a large assembly presents himself to the mayor as the mysterious stranger who has saved his life. The mayor does not venture to contradict him, and is quite in the hands of the sculptor, who uses his power to the advantage of a friend.

IN ITALIAN CITIES.

In a country like Italy, in which dialects are spoken which differ so widely from one another as almost to give them the dignity of distinct languages, it is necessary at times to resort to translation into the more general tongue of the country before a theatrical or literary work which has achieved fame in its native town or province can be made comprehensible to the rest of the country. Such is the case with *A San Francisco*, a short lyrical tragedy written by Signori Di Giacomo and Sebastiani in the Neapolitan dialect, and afterwards translated into Italian by Signor R. Bracco. When it was produced recently at the Teatro Nazionale, Rome, the author of the libretto (Signor Di Giacomo) objected, however, to the production of the Italian rendering of his lines, on the ground that their adoption dissipated the local colouring, and his wish was allowed to prevail. The work consists of one brief scene, but Signor Di Giacomo has found within its narrow bounds sufficient room for a very extensive supply of depressing horrors. The rising of the curtain introduces to the audience a large general cell in the San Francisco prison, Naples. Lying about the cell on their beds are prisoners of all types,

carrying on conversations respecting past and prospective crimes, but of them all the only two who have any bearing on the story are Giovanni Orcietto and Tore Pazzia. Orcietto has been thrown into prison for murdering his wife in a fit of jealousy, and in the course of conversation tells Pazzia the story of his crime, and informs him that before his arrest he devoted the whole of the year which had elapsed since the crime to a search for the man who had been the cause of his wife's dishonour. As the story is unfolded Pazzia becomes so agitated that Orcietto first suspects, and then feels certain, that he is talking to the very man for whom he had been seeking, and before either a fellow-prisoner or a warder can intervene, he draws a dagger and drives it through Pazzia's body, and—down comes the curtain. It is, perhaps, hardly to be wondered at that the production aroused no great enthusiasm in the Roman audience. *Principio di Secolo*, a new four-act drama by Signor Rovetta, made its first appearance towards the end of October at Turin, and it has subsequently been produced by the Zacconi-Pilotto Company at Milan, the town in which its scene is laid. It is a tragic page out of the history of the year 1814, when Napoleon s disastrous Russian campaign had weakened his power in all parts of Europe. In Milan, at that time the capital of Italy, a three-sided conflict occurred, immediately after the news of the disaster reached the place, between the supporters of General Beauharnais (Napoleon's viceroy), the party who were desirous of restoring the Austrian sovereignty in Italy, and those whose one aim was to establish a purely Italian government. In the first act of the new drama are shown the incipient signs of revolt against the Napoleonic rule as personified in Prina, the minister appointed by Napoleon to control the finances of Italy, and the Marchesa Ghislieri makes an attempt to corrupt General Pino's fidelity to the Napoleonic party. In the second act, which takes place in one of Prina's rooms, the Marchesa Ippolita d'Arco, a rejected *amante* of the minister, warns him that a conspiracy is in progress against his life, and seeks to put him on his guard against General Pino. Prina, however, declines to believe in the necessity for precaution. The third act shows the gradual progress of the conspiracy, and in the fourth Prina's palace is suddenly broken into and sacked, and the unfortunate minister is stabbed and thrown out of a window. At both Turin and Milan the performance of the new drama was most successful.

IN MADRID.

An attempt has been made at the Teatro Español to revive Calderon's *Semiramis*, and to that end the drama was submitted

to a cutting-down and reconstructing process at the hands of Señor Echegaray, probably Spain's most popular dramatist of the present day. In spite, however, of his genius, and the best efforts of Señora Guerrero, Señores Mendoza, Jiménez, and Ortega and others, who played the leading parts when it was put upon the stage, *Semiramis* remained as unattractive as it has always proved to be. Two new farces were produced last month at the Comedia, but neither is likely to have a very long career. *Yo Pecador* is the first, and little can be said for it beyond that its lack of vigour and faulty construction were occasionally relieved by a few lines of good versification. The value of the other of these works, *La Interview*, the author of which has shown great foresight in keeping his identity a secret, is best estimated from the remarks of a Spanish critic who wrote respecting it, "Those who attribute the paternity of this work to a dramatic author of renown are undoubtedly mistaken. It is my belief that *La Interview* was written by that author's footman, and in expressing that opinion I have to tender my apologies to the footman." The Teatro Real has been giving a series of well-known operas, opening with Wagner's *Flying Dutchman* (*El Buque Fantasma*). Wagner seemed little to the taste of the Real audience, and M. Ambrose Thomas's *Hamlet*, which was produced on a subsequent date, had a much better reception than *El Buque Fantasma*. Señorita Tetrazzini, as Ophelia, and Señor Blanchart, as Hamlet, met with the most cordial of receptions.

IN NEW YORK.

First among the plays to be noticed this month is *The Cherry Pickers*, which has now had a prosperous run of over a month at the Fourteenth-street Theatre. The usual background of up-to-date melodrama—regimental colours and active service—is supplied, the Afghan war making a more novel setting for the play than the Civil War. Mr. Joseph Arthur is the author, and has done his work extremely well. Mr. Robert Buchanan's *Squire Kate* has been seen again at Palmer's, with Miss Georgia Cayvan in her old part. A new theatre on Lexington-avenue, between Forty-first and Forty-second Streets, christened the Murray Hill, was first opened with *In Mexico*, a romantic opera by Mr. C. T. Dazey, music by Mr. Oscar Weil. The piece was well received; but, even with the advantage of Miss Jessie Bartlett Davis' singing, it did not achieve popularity. An Irish opera, called *Brian Boru*, has been produced at the Broadway, and, though of very ordinary merit, was immediately successful. At the Academy of Music, Colonel Mapleson has begun a four

weeks' season, opening with *Aïda*. Signor Durot, Signor Pinto, Mme. Bonaplata Bau, and others of the east, were new-comers at New York; but, owing as much to the able support from the more unimportant members of the company, as to their own excellence, they conquered the public at the first performance. *Aida* was succeeded by *Traviata*, with Mme. Hariclee-Darclee as Violetta. This performance was also new to America, and met with deserved recognition. *Trovatore*, *Les Huguenots*, *La Somnambula*, and *Faust* followed, marked by the appearance of Signor De Marchi, Mme. Albini, Mme. Huguet, and Miss Strong, who has recently been heard in London. *The Mummy* has been produced with every sign of success at the Garden. Mr. Robert Hilliard, as Rameses II., was all that could be wished for, playing the part with a peculiar distinction. Mr. Reginald de Koven and Mr. Harry B. Smith are past masters in the art of writing comic operas, and naturally, therefore, the announcement of another work from them aroused great expectation. That expectation was not disappointed is saying a great deal. *The Mandarin* starts with an exceedingly humorous idea, which is well worked out, and the numbers of Mr. De Koven are as tuneful as of yore. A good supporting company ensured its success. Mr. Charles Dalton has appeared as Marcus Superbus in *The Sign of the Cross*, and has met with a very gratifying reception. The production, which Mr. William Greet has organised, took place at the Knickerbocker. The latest Casino medley was produced early in the month, and is entitled *Jack and the Beanstalk*. Mr. Auguste Van Biene has made his *début* on the American stage in his world-famous part of Paul Borinski in *The Broken Melody*. The beauty and the art of his performance were instantly recognised, and his playing on the 'cello was listened to in a sort of awe. It has been declared by more than one expert that the American people have never heard the 'cello played until now.

Echoes from the Green Room.

The Lyceum revival of *Richard III.* will take place on December 19. Miss Ellen Terry has played Lady Anne in the courtship scene to Sir Henry Irving's Gloster at special performances, but has elected to give up the part to Miss Julia Arthur. Miss Geneviève Ward will be the Queen Margaret.

Madame Bernhardt, already half "suffocated with roses," is, like Voltaire, to witness her own apotheosis. Before long there will be a brilliant fête in Paris in her honour. One feature of it will be a banquet, another a special performance at her theatre. The committee of management includes nearly all distinguished men of letters, many of them belonging to the Académie Française. Gracefully enough, M. Jules Claretie, the director of the Maison de Molière, gives his support to the movement, pointedly encouraging a project that a medal shall be struck to commemorate the event. Madame Bernhardt, in the course of an interview with an English journalist, has spoken in the warmest terms of the cordiality with which she has been received at all times in London, as elsewhere. "In fact," she added, "foreign artists run a risk of being spoilt on your side of the Channel."

Madame Patti, after her recent concert tour, will return to Craig-y-Nos, where she will pass the Chistmas holidays. Next May, in recognition of her gratuitous efforts in the cause of charity, she is to be presented with the freedom, then to be conferred upon a woman for the first time, of the ancient borough of Brecon.

The late Mr. Du Maurier regarded Miss Ellen Terry as the ideal of Trilby. "Her whole personality," he remarked to a friend, "is suggestive of the character. You know that I described her as being of the same height as Miss Terry, mentioning her by name, so that there could be no mistake about it. For she is the type of woman that appeals to one artistically the most."

Signora Duse was to appear at the New Theatre, Berlin, towards the end of last month.

If the *Zukunft* is not misinformed, the German Emperor is still sighing for new worlds to conquer. A young poet, it is said, was lately introduced to his majesty at Wiesbaden by Herr Von Huelsen, the manager of the Theatre Royal there. In conjunction with this young poet, the Emperor is writing an elaborate drama, the scene of which is laid partly at Basle.

Those who remember the attitude long adopted by the Roman Catholic Church towards the stage, and especially the fact that Molière, as an actor, was buried with maimed rites, may be surprised to hear that the Pope has given a sort of official sanction to theatres. He has allowed a playhouse to be erected in the Vatican gardens, for the entertainment of his guards, and plays with music will be performed there by amateurs or professionals.

Madame Modjeska is in improved health, and hopes to reappear on the stage before long. By the way, she has six hundred hives of Italian bees on her estate in California, and every autumn finds ready markets for the honey.

The *Revue D'Art Dramatique*, in the course of an appreciative review of Sir Henry Irving's work as an actor-manager, suggests that the Lyceum Theatre should be styled the House of Shakspere, as the Comédie-Française

is known as the Maison de Molière. Referring to the revival of *Cymbeline*, the writer describes Miss Terry's Imogen as the finest success she has ever achieved, and to Sir Henry Irving's Iachimo as recalling to mind his "marvellous creation" of Mephistopheles. "In all respects," it is added, "the performance is worthy of the House of Shakspere. *Cymbeline*, if not one of the masterpieces of Shakspere, is profoundly impressive and very curious to see."

Mrs. Patrick Campbell is expected to play the chief part in *The Sorrows of Satan*, to be produced at the Shaftesbury.

Herr Humperdinck, the composer of *Hänsel und Gretel*, has resigned his post as musical critic of the *Frankfort Gazette*, intending to devote himself exclusively to new works.

Mr. Pinero is finishing his new play for Mr. Alexander, in addition to the libretto for a Savoy Opera.

Mr. Hare, Mr. Willard, and Mr. Tree have arrived in America on their different tours. Mr. Arthur Bourchier is following them. Mr. Tree will return early next year, and will probably open Her Majesty's towards the end of February. Mr. Willard began at Boston on November 16th.

Herr Carl Goldmark, the composer of the opera *Das Heimchen am Herd* (*The Cricket on the Hearth*), the great success of which was recorded in these pages at the time of its production, has been the recipient of a mark of high favour on the part of the Emperor of Austria. He has been invested with the Knight's Cross of the Order of Leopold. This order ranks higher than the Francis Joseph Order, and even than the Order of the Iron Crown.

M. Saint-Saens, the composer of *Henry VIII.*, will not again write for the stage. "I have no wish," he says, "to pen any more operas, because the work is too long and too fatiguing for me. I can no longer pass long months composing music from eight to ten hours a day. Neither my eyes nor my general health will permit it. I wish to devote myself exclusively to labours which, if they demand as much or more attention of mind, do not call for so great an expenditure of physical force. The ballet of *Javotte* will be the *poscriptum* of my theatrical career."

Madame Nordica will not be heard at the Metropolitan Opera House, New York, this year, but is engaged for Covent Garden next spring.

Madame Emma Nevada is about to leave Paris to sing at St. Petersburg, and for this reason has had to decline an engagement at the Opéra Comique.

Madame Melba arrived in New York early in November for her American season. Her engagement at Covent Garden for next season is cancelled.

As a rule, it will be found that those who leave the stage soon long to reappear upon it. M. Lasalle, who exchanged his career as a singer for that of a manufacturer of bricks and cement, has signed a contract to sing in New York this season at £120 a performance, and may possibly be seen in London next summer. So, too, may Signor Tamagno, already cured of his once consuming love of that South American farm.

Miss Ada Rehan's hair has become quite grey during the last year, but there is no reason to suppose that she is in anything but excellent health.

Lovers of opera will regret to hear that Signor Leoncavallo and Signor Mascagni have temporarily interrupted the work of composition. Each is engaged for a concert tour in America this winter. They take no companies with them, in the assurance that they can find sufficiently able

musicians in New York. It is not improbable that before long Signor Giordano will also cross the Atlantic. Signor Mascagni has composed a new opera, but is not certain whether he will produce it before his return to Milan.

It is a pity that so estimable an artist as Mrs. Kendal is unable to keep her temper. Attention was lately drawn in the *Referee* to the dilapidated state of the grave of her brother, T. W. Robertson, in Abney-park Cemetery. "The enclosed," she writes to the editor, who, of course, had not treated her with any discourtesy, "has been sent to me. It looks and sounds like your paper. Let me inform you that the widow and daughter of the late Tom Robertson are still living, and that it is, alas! out of my power to do what is so amiably suggested. When I have the right I shall not seek aid from the sources you propose, but from more *respectable* quarters! P.S.—If you publish this letter, send me a copy of your paper to Royalty Theatre, Glasgow, where I shall be next week—(otherwise I should not see it)—when one of my servants will send stamps for same."

Mrs. Kendal might have been content to point out that her brother's name stands in the cemetery books as the proprietor of the grave, and that, consequently, no one has any power to interfere with it. By an unfortunate oversight, it was not thought necessary at the time of Robertson's death to transfer the title. In another letter to the *Referee* Mrs. Kendal continues: "As you have been manly enough to publish my letter!—and what an honour for your paper it has been!—I *will* tell you this! . . I offered years ago to attend to my dear brother's grave, but the paper proving the ownership of same cannot be found, and among so many has been lost! and (as even you in your ignorance may know) that unless one can prove the ownership of the grave—to clean or alter anything connected with it is *impossible!* When you write my Brother's name again—do it on your *knees!* with your *hat* off! I never knew your paper existed—till I saw it one day on my kitchen table! when I told my Housekeeper to burn it. She rang for the Groom—who sent for the Stable Boy—who did so!"

Whatever differences of opinion we have had, and may have, with Mr. Clement Scott, we gladly acknowledge that in this matter he has shown a very fine spirit. He was on terms of close friendship with Robertson, and on learning of the condition of the grave he had it restored and beautified at his own cost. How he managed to do this, in the face of the cemetery regulations, is at present a mystery.

At the end of October Mr. Clement Scott completed twenty-five years' service for the great journal with which he has long been so prominently identified, and which, as even his sternest critics will admit, could ill-afford to spare him. "As proof of our confidence and of our belief in his ability and experience," his proprietors say, "we are pleased to state that we have made such arrangements as will henceforth preclude Mr. Scott from writing on theatrical matters in any other columns than those of the *Daily Telegraph*." Nor, all things considered, is the announcement in any way surprising.

Mr. Bancroft's charitable disposition, often proved, is revealing itself in a new way. On November 23rd, at Queen's Hall, he gave a reading, arranged by himself, of Dickens's *Christmas Carol*, in aid of the cancer wards of the Middlesex Hospital. He had previously given the same reading before the Union Society of Cambridge University, and has consented, at the invitation of the Vice-Chancellor of Oxford University, whose guest he will be, to repeat it yet once more at the New Schools on December 1st.

In some quarters there is a distinct tendency to hark back to old pieces. When the inevitably long run of *Boys Together* is at an end, it will be followed by a revival of Douglas Jerrold's *Black-Eyed Susan*, with Mr. Terriss and Miss Millward, of course, as the hero and heroine. Probably Mr. Harry Nicholls will be the Gnatbrain, Mr. J. D. Beveridge the Doggrass, and Miss Vane Featherston the Dolly Mayflower. Of this admirable play, originally produced at the Surrey Theatre in 1829, with T. P. Cooke as William, a versified adaptation, it will be remembered, was prepared by W. G. Wills for Mr. and Mrs. Kendal, who gave it at the St. James's Theatre in 1880. The revival at the Adelphi will be accompanied by one of *All That Glitters Is Not Gold*, with Mr. Harry Nicholls as Toby Twinkle.

Mr. Oscar Barrett's Drury Lane pantomime promises to be on much the same lines as usual. The scenery will be of that magnificence to which Sir Augustus Harris accustomed us, and the principal comic characters will be in the hands of Mr. Herbert Campbell, Mr. Dan Leno, and Miss Clara Jecks. Miss Decima Moore will lend to the piece a dainty, light-operatic touch that will be thoroughly welcome; and little Miss Geraldine Somerset (whose portrait appeared in *The Theatre* not long ago) will charm her audiences as completely as she did those who saw her in Mr. Barrett's Lyceum productions.

Sir Henry Irving's never-failing pride in his profession—a pride that endears him to fellow players hardly less than his gifts endear him to the great playgoing public—has received a fresh illustration. On the 24th of October he laid the foundation stone of the Dulwich Public Library, which, at the wish of the chief donor to the cost, Mr. Passmore Edwards, will stand as a memorial to Edward Alleyn, the founder of the college not far away. One of those present at the ceremony was an old schoolfellow, Sir Edward Clarke, M.P. Replying to the vote of thanks, Sir Henry, after speaking of the importance and value of public libraries, said that to him, "as a player," it was an added pleasure that the building was to be on ground given by a player of noble heart for the public good. "Edward Alleyn, friend and companion of Shakspere, his comrade in art, a successful (and therefore much abused) actor-manager, was a man of uncommon talents. From small beginnings he honourably acquired an excellent fortune, the whole of which he devoted to the public weal. For nearly three centuries his forethought and charity had borne increasingly good fruit." The speech was in the same tone as that which Sir Henry delivered at the unveiling in Aldermanbury last July of the monument to Heminge and Condell—"these two players, who lived in affectionate friendship with another player, William Shakspere."

Mr. Wilson Barrett has read his new piece, *The Daughters of Babylon*, to the members of his company, and it will probably be produced in the early spring, when the alternate performances of *The Manxman* and *The Sign of the Cross* have ceased to attract. *The Pilgrim's Progress* venture is still alive, but it delays greatly in bringing itself to the production stage.

Mrs. Bernard Beere has happily recovered from her recent severe illness.

Last May, it may be remembered, two performances were given to mark the completion of twenty years of Mr. Charles Wyndham's career as actor-manager. The total receipts amounted to £2452, and Mr. Wyndham' with characteristic generosity, handed over the whole sum to the Actors, Benevolent Fund. On November 17, in recognition of that generosity, he

was presented on the stage of the Lyceum theatre with an illuminated address by the representatives of the charity, Sir Henry Irving presiding. In making the presentation, the chairman said that his pleasure on that occasion was enhanced by the fact that the recipient of the honour was an old friend of his own, one of more than thirty years' standing. Mr. Wyndham had devised many excellent things in his time, but nothing more excellent than this gift of charity and brotherly love.

"LIKE Garrick, with whom your name is linked for all time, you have contributed," the address ran, "to the gaiety of nations by the unapproachable spontaneity of your graceful comedy; now you have touched our hearts with a deeper power than was ever his by this evidence of your tender solicitude for those members of your craft whom fate has unkindly buffeted. As you have ever stood unrivalled in your art, so now you stand unrivalled among the living donors to the fund which is so dear to all in our profession." The signatures to this address were headed by that of Sir Henry Irving.

MR. WYNDHAM, in reply, said that he valued highly this generous recognition of the poor service which, by the kind aid of brother and sister artists, he was enabled to render to the fund. It was an added gratification to him that the hand by which the address had been presented to him was that of an old friend, a fellow-worker from the days of early manhood. There was no merit in that act of his; every man was a permanent debtor to his profession or his trade, and this service, whatever it might be, he regarded merely as a duty for the moment discharged, and for the moment only.

MR. JOHN COLEMAN'S *Robespierre*, turning upon a fictitious jealousy between the revolutionary dictator and Talma, is likely to be tried before long at a Drury Lane matinée.

THE revival of *As You Like It* will take place at the St. James's on December 2nd.

THE last weeks of *Charley's Aunt* are at length announced. How many those weeks will number it might be hazardous to predict. Meanwhile Mr. Penley has in preparation a new play, in which he will figure as an Uncle of doubtful antecedents.

ON December 2nd, when Mr. Leopold de Rothschild presides over the annual dinner of the Actors' Benevolent Fund, the Lyceum, the Criterion, and the St. James's will each be closed, so that Sir Henry Irving, Mr. Wyndham, and Mr. Alexander may be able to attend.

WE are sorry to learn that Miss Rose Norreys is no better, and that the delusions from which she suffers show no signs of disappearance.

IT seems to have been decided that the Augustus Harris Memorial Fund shall be devoted to maintaining at one of the hospitals a ward that will be reserved for patients connected with the dramatic and musical professions. This ward will be called after the late manager of Drury Lane, and his memory is also to be kept green by the erection of a drinking-fountain somewhere in Covent Garden. But to carry out these plans a much larger sum of money is required than has already been subscribed.

ONE generally says that "the play's the thing;" but there is also the question of the theatre. Mr. Weedon Grossmith has got his play, but not his theatre. No date can yet be fixed for the production of *The Idle Apprentice*, which Mr. Joseph Hatton has finished. It is said to be a realistic study of the days of Jack Sheppard, with all the novelist and playwright would be likely to see in it, and all the possibilities that an enter-

prising stage manager could desire. Mr. Weedon Grossmith should make a unique Jack Sheppard, and one who has seen him dressed for the part and heard him sing his opening ballad, and listened to his patter, declares him to be the ideal rogue who could get into any house and out of any gaol. Mr. Hatton's idea of Jonathan Wild is opposed to the vulgar ruffian of the old drama, as will be seen by a brief sketch of the great thief-taker's remarkable career, published elsewhere in our present number. We understand that Mr. Hatton is engaged upon a novel on the same subject.

Mr. Bronson Howard has been rightly impressed by the merits of *The Sign of the Cross*. "Since the old English Miracle and Mystery Plays, he writes, "this is the first piece to bring the Christian religion boldly upon the stage of a theatre." Is it? A man of his reading might have been expected to know that one of the greatest of old French tragedies, Corneille's *Polyeucte*, is on a similar subject, and has been made the basis of a noble opera.

An anecdote of Mr. George Bernard Shaw. Miss Mary Penfield, the actress-writer, lately returned to New York from England. According to the *Mirror*, while in London she met Mr. Shaw one evening at the theatre, told him she was writing articles on English literary celebrities, and suggested that she might make him the subject of a column. Mr. Shaw smilingly accepted an invitation to call upon her one afternoon for a chat, for which, however, no definite appointment was made. Not long afterwards someone impatiently rang the bell at Miss Penfield's lodgings. It was Mr. Shaw, with his arms full of books and papers. But Miss Penfield had gone to Henley, and the critic-dramatist, perspiring under his burden, angrily took his departure. Miss Penfield wrote to him the same night, expressing her regret that she had not been at home, and asking him to call again. His reply was as follows: "Having made an appointment which I thought was of importance to you *I* did *not* go up the river on Saturday, although a half-holiday between my long journey from Bayreuth and the worry of this week of incessant work would have been very welcome to me. I look in vain through your letter for the faintest indication of any consciousness on your part of the outrageous way in which you have wasted my time and trifled with your business. Your suggestion that I should reserve another afternoon for you is one at which I can only gasp. You are the most audaciously irresponsible young woman I have ever met." Of course, ordinary persons ought to feel a presentiment of impending joy, and be at home when, without their knowledge, a very great man has mentally resolved to call.

As we have already stated, the reduction of twenty-five per cent. lately granted in fares to theatrical travelling companies has been due almost entirely to Mr. C. L. Carson, of the *Stage*, and a subscription is on foot among theatrical managers to recognise his efforts.

No event of recent years has caused more surprise than the lately-decided divorce case of Barnes *v.* Barnes and Glenney. The petitioner, Mr. J. H. Barnes, is an actor who, by thorough, legitimate, and unostentatious work in his art, has gained the respect of playgoers in the two hemispheres. To no one has his good-natured friendship been more consistently shown than to the co-respondent in this case, whom he habitually received in his domestic circle. He may find consolation in the love of his daughter, who is secured to him by the judge's decision, and also in the knowledge that the has the sympathy of all who know him.

Mr. Richard Davey's collection of stories, *The Sand Sea*, has deservedly attracted attention. He has dramatised two of them, *A Queen's Adventure*

and *A Terrible Confession*, the version of the latter being intended for Signora Duse.

Mr. John Lancaster, the husband of Miss Wallis, was found drowned at Blackpool on November 12th. He was a prosperous manufacturer at Manchester, but lived for the greater part of the year at the resort where he died. He had all along been the proprietor of the Shaftesbury Theatre, which he opened in 1888 with a revival of *As You Like It*, his wife playing Rosalind. The terms upon which he built it were so favourable that, although often without a tenant, it had never been to him a source of loss.

Mr. James Doel, the oldest actor living—he is over ninety—visited the Plymouth Theatre the other day, and had a hearty greeting from players and audience alike. The old man returned thanks for a little address of welcome, and added to his expressions of gratitude. "And I'll tell you what—I mean to live on as long as I can!" That is quite the right spirit for a hale and hearty nonagenarian. We cannot afford to lose the only man, or, at any rate, one of the very few men living, who saw Napoleon on board the Bellerophon.

The yearly performance in aid of the Royal General Theatrical Fund took place on November 12th at Drury Lane Theatre, kindly lent for the occasion by Mr. John Coleman. As usual, there was a varied programme, including selections from several plays now being performed. Miss Ellen Terry was unable to appear, but Sir Henry Irving was present to repeat his powerfully dramatic recitation of *The Uncle* to the musical accompaniment composed by the late Sir Julius Benedict.

The Shakspere Theatre at Battersea was opened on November 16th with *My Girl*. One may well ask why the name of Shakspere is dragged in? However, if the inanities of musical farce are what the public demand, managers cannot be severely blamed for providing them. Mr. Thornton, the member of Parliament for the district, formally opened the new playhouse, and Mr. John Burns, M.P., who was also present, failed to make his escape without yielding to the demand for a speech. It would be interesting to know whether the multiplication of suburban theatres greatly affects those in the regular theatrical area. Another, it is said, is to be erected at Highbury.

The Theatrical Ladies' Guild, which does an increasingly good work in the way of charity, had its yearly meeting on November 20th at the Lyceum Theatre, the president, Miss Fanny Brough, taking the chair. Ladies only were admitted. It appeared that one thing undertaken by the body was a lending library, which had been added to by Miss Kate Rivers, Mrs. H. Eversfield, Mr. B. L. Farjeon, Mr. Davenport Adams, Miss Edith Kenward, and others. Miss Ellen Terry distributed badges to successful workers in the sewing-bees, and congratulated the guild on the good service it had done. She wished with all her heart that she could have taken a more active part in its labours.

On ne badine pas avec l'Amour is in rehearsal at the Comédie Française. M. Hervieu's *Loi de l'Homme* is to follow. Two short pieces by M. Edouard Pailleron have been accepted.

M. Carvalho has accepted for the Opéra Comique a piece called *Kermaria*, the music of which is by M. Camille Erlanger. It is likely to be the first novelty of the winter season there. Mme. Jane Marcy has joined the company.

Some documents respecting the original of the Dame aux Camélias, Alphonsine Plessis, have lately been printed in Paris. It appears that she was married in London in 1846 to a French count, her age at the time

being twenty-two. Dumas did not hear of this for some time ; otherwise, perhaps, he would have made some modifications in what laid the foundation of his literary fortune.

M. Maxime Boucheron, the French playwright and journalist, who died a few weeks ago, was not a happy man, though he found success when *Miss Helyett* (given in England under the title of *Miss Decima*) drew all Paris to one theatre, and created, like *Trilby*, a veritable mania, photographs and statuettes of the bewitching little heroine being seen everywhere, and all sorts of articles being named after her by way of attracting public notice. M. Boucheron had set his hopes, however, upon more serious attempts, as in *L'Ami de la Maison*, which had been accepted at the Français, but which ran only for three nights. For a time he assisted Arnold Mortier in the articles for the *Figaro* over the signature "Un Monsieur de l'Orchestre."

Charles Reade, as the *New York Mirror* remarks, was something of a *gourmet*. He once desired to taste a canvas-back duck. Mr. Howard Paul sent him a brace, with instructions as to how they should be cooked. In the hamper was a bottle of bay rum, of course a toilette accessory only. "The ducks," the novelist wrote in reply, "were excellent, my dear Paul. I enjoyed them exceedingly. But the bay rum must be an acquired taste. It did not go at all well with the wild fowl, so I substituted champagne. The bay rum was better as hot punch."

In March next, if present arrangements hold good, Mr. Bourchier will produce Mr. Herman Merivale's *Charlotte Corday* at the Princess's Theatre. The play should give Miss Violet Vanbrugh a great opportunity for displaying her undeniably fine qualities as a romantic actress, and on the large stage of the Oxford-street theatre there will be plenty of room to mount it suitably.

The Circus Girl is to be the title of the new play at the Gaiety.

Mr. Hurst's new play, *Woman's World*, will be produced at a matinée at the Court Theatre on December 8th.

Mrs. Scott-Siddons, great-granddaughter of Mrs. Siddons, died recently at Neuilly, near Paris. About thirty years ago she made herself well known at the Haymarket, playing Rosalind, Juliet (to the Romeo of Mr. Kendal), and Pauline in *The Lady of Lyons*. In 1872, after a tour in America, she produced Mr. Richard Lee's *Ordeal by Touch* at the Queen's Theatre, but without success. No better fortune attended Mr. Walter S. Raleigh's *Queen and Cardinal*, with which she opened a brief season at the Haymarket in 1881. Mrs. Scott-Siddons inherited the statuesque beauty more than the talent of the Kembles, and for some years had lived in retirement. Her remains will be interred near New York, where she was born.

Mr. Charles Wilmot, of the Grand Theatre, Islington, died on November 18th. His had been a strange and varied career. A Devonian by birth, he acted for some time in Australia, and, in 1868, returning to England, became the proprietor of the Old Coal Hole Tavern, Fountain-court, Strand, so much frequented by actors in those days. In 1878, with an old colleague, Mr. Clarance Holt, now stage manager of Drury Lane Theatre, he opened the Duke's Theatre, Holborn, where he made a fortune out of *New Babylon*. Five years after he migrated to the Grand Theatre with which he was more or less successfully connected to the end of his life. He secured the best west-end companies by turns, and his pantomimes invariably came up to a high standard.

Mr. Richard Mansfield has transferred his latest New York engagement from the Garrick to the Garden Theatre in order to have a larger stage for *Richard III.* and *The Merchant of Venice*.

The Hon. A. Oakey Hall contributes to the *Ladies' Home Journal* for November a description of the first appearance in America of Jenny Lind, vividly describing the enthusiasm she excited on singing Bayard Taylor's ode,

"I greet with a full heart the land of the West,
Whose banner of stars o'er a world is unrolled!"

American Actors of To-Day is the title of a book recently brought out at Boston. Curiously enough, of the forty-two players it notices only twenty-seven are living; and of Mr. Nat Goodwin it is said that all foreign critics recognise him as "the first and most representative of American comedians. For ourselves, we are under the impression that Mr. Joseph Jeffersson is still alive.

"For the average singer," writes Madame Melba in an article on "The Vocal Student" in the *Ladies' Home Journal*, "America offers most excellent teachers; she can find all she needs at home." "For operatic singers some foreign training is practically necessary so long as impresarios consider Europe their market, and retired artists make it their home. But no girl, unless she has money to throw away—I mean by this a large fortune to spend—should go abroad for vocal instruction until she has been passed musically by at least two or three artists."

One clerical innovation in the United States is worthy of notice. The Rev. Edward Davis, pastor of a church at Oakland, California, added footlights to his pulpit platform, and advertised himself to appear in a dramatic monologue. "The act that I shall introduce next Sunday night," he said to an interviewer, "represents the two schools of expression which may be called the impressionist and the realistic. As for me, I prefer the latter. The weakness of the stage in the present age is its tendency to the exaggeration of sentiment. The emotions are often merely acted, not experienced, and, to produce effect, necessarily over-acted."

South African playgoers continue to be well looked after. Mr. Frank Wheeler is taking out an operatic company, consisting of forty persons, with a repertoire of fourteen pieces, mostly Gilbert and Sullivan's.

In his agreeable memoirs, reviewed in the last issue of *The Theatre*, Signor Arditi tells us how he first met Madame Patti, then a mere child. "The first time I ever set eyes on Adelina was in New York, when she and her mother visited the hotel at which I lived, in order to eat the macaroni which was always excellently prepared by an Italian *chef* of renown, and her determined little airs and manners then already showed plainly that she was destined to become a ruler of men. Madame Salvador Patti, *veuve* Barili, Adelina's mother, was anxious that I should hear the child sing, and so she brought her little daughter to my rooms one day. Bottesini and I were highly amused to see the air of importance with which the tiny songstress first selected a comfortable seat for her doll in such proximity that she was able to see her while singing, and then, having said: '*Là, ma bonne petite, attends que ta maman te chante quelque chose de joli*, she demurely placed her music on the piano, and asked me to accompany her in a great opera."

It is to be feared that the enterprise and alacrity of English journalists are again at fault. But for the London correspondents of Paris papers we might be in ignorance of events of no little interest. For instance, we were informed by one of them a week or two ago that "MM. Henri Irving et Wilson Barett (*sic*) had sung a duet at the Royal Albert Hall." Why cannot we be told of these things in our own newspapers?

Other French papers are somewhat in arrear. Early last month the

Monde Artiste announced as an article of news that "Henry Irving, le grand tragédien Anglais, à fait à Londres une conférence sur l'art de l'acteur." The "conférence" referred to was the lecture delivered by Sir Henry at the Royal Institution nearly two years ago.

EVEN at the Maison de Molière, one of the most conservative of institutions, the spirit of reform is not unknown. It has been decided there that parts in modern plays shall not remain the exclusive property of players who created them.

REVIVALS of *Les Effrontès* and the *Bataille de Dames* are in contemplation at the Comédie Française, where *L'Evasion* may be expected shortly.

THE recent visit of the Tsar to the Grand Opéra in Paris was marked by a singular incident. Probably tired out, he gave a signal for the gala-performance to stop. Senora Mauri, the Spanish dancer, was at that moment on the stage. Her indignation knew no bounds. "Your Emperor!" she exclaimed to a member of the Government who happened to be near; "I will not say what I think of him; he is not even a peasant of the Danube." The audience took their disappointment in good part, going out without an audible murmur.

IT is expected that Mlle. Van Zandt will reappear at the Opéra Comique. From this very stage, about ten years ago, she was hissed by an excited audience, who thought, certainly without foundation, that she was not in a fit condition to present herself before the public. From that time she has practically been an exile from Paris.

M. ANTOINE, formerly of the Théâtre Libre, has not been a success as co-director of the Odéon. Not only is his stage management complained of, but his language to the actors and actresses during rehearsal has excited lively indignation. A complaint was recently sent by some of them to the Minister of Fine Arts, but this was counter-blasted by an address which a number of other members of the Company presented to M. Antoine, declaring themselves quite satisfied with his conduct. The former director, too, has been criticising his choice of plays, but in the future M. Antoine will not have too much to do with this, for he is to be simply stage manager, being superseded in his functions as co-director with M. Ginistry. There is even talk—so badly has the Odéon been doing—of withdrawing the subsidy of £4000 a year which the theatre receives from the State.

THE Comédie Parisienne has been renamed the Athénée Comique, after the theatre so famous a few years ago.

GOLD does not purchase everything. The other day an American capitalist of dramatic proclivities offered a Paris manager £3000 to produce a play, though only to be told that it was absolutely unpresentable.

SIGNOR MANCINELLI'S opera, *Hero and Leander*, based upon a libretto by Signor Boïto, is soon to be published. Musically it is of the new Italo-German school. Hero is a soprano, Leander a tenor, and Hero's father a baritone. The first of three acts takes place during the feast to Aphrodite, and includes the sacred ballets and ceremonies in which Hero takes a vow as a priestess of the temple.

THE Spanish Parliament has voted a tax of five per cent. on the prices of seats in theatres, much to the indignation of the playgoing public both in Madrid and elsewhere.

THE late Mr. Henry E. Abbey is described by the *Musical Age* as a gambler pure and simple. He was "never identified with the building up of art in any of its higher or nobler phases. His successes were those of reputations already established and made famous. He never attempted to aid

an artist to make a name. He never was instrumental in bringing forth new artists or important works on their merits. He was a financial speculator, often showing great lack of judgment, which eventually wrought his finanical ruin. At all times the box-office receipts told the story to him. It was a pure gamble. He died as he had lived, staking all upon the ace—and losing."

Of the many artists introduced to American audiences by Mr. Abbey, only three, Madame Nordica, Madame Melba, and Sir Henry Irving, were represented at his funeral. Even Madame Sarah Bernhardt and Madame Patti were conspicuous by their absence.

Madame Calve, in a paper to the American *Ladies' Home Journal*, specially addresses students of vocal music. After speaking of the training required for the operatic and the concert stage, the impersonation of character, and the value of suggestions, she says: "The Americans have, it seems to me, in the field of music, and especially in the field of vocal music, all of the characteristics of the conquering race. They are possessed naturally of the most exquisite voices, which, when properly cultivated and trained, are almost unrivalled; they have indomitable energy, perseverance, and pluck; they stop at nothing, are deterred by no trouble, and prevented by no obstacle."

Miss Lilian Russell, the American actress and singer, who took the Lyceum, London, not very long ago, for *The Queen of Brilliants*, has just been married for the sixth time.

An incident which occurred at a choir rehearsal in one of the fashionable Milwaukee churches not long ago is related by the *Musical Age*. They were preparing a beautiful selection, the first words of which were, "I am a Pilgrim." It so happened that the music divided the word pilgrim and made a pause after the first syllable. The effect was inevitable. The soprano sang in a high key, "I am a Pil——;" the alto repeated, "I am a Pil—;" the tenor acknowledged that he was a "Pil—," and when the bass came thundering in with the like declaration, "I am a Pil——" it was too much for the gravity of the singers, who forthwith gave up the selection.

The *Musical Age* continues to contend for a better appreciation and encouragement of the American pianist, the American singer, the American musician, and the American composer. It finds many influential supporters in the press, but the other side of the question is very far from being overlooked. Not a few papers are candid enough to point out that the European artist obtains his or her unprecedented salary on account of sheer superiority; that the American composer and singer to a certain extent do not possess the talent of the foreigner; that American enthusiasm is given only to merit, is not a question of a fad or a craze, and is only another proof that art is international.

The Title Page and Index for the current volume of *The Theatre* will be ready by the middle of December, price 2d.